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ENGLAND AND THE MONARCHY

BY SIR JOHN SQUIRE

THERE are moments, after one has read reports of some particularly stupid speech or question by a Member of Parliament, when one wishes that candidates might be refused nomination unless they had previously passed an examination in elementary history and political science.

Certain books they should certainly be obliged to read: Pollock on the *Science of Politics*, Seeley on the *Expansion of England*, and Lecky, especially his Lecture (1892), on *The Empire: its Value and its Growth*, Monypenny and Buckle's *Life of Disraeli*, which bristles with lessons for today—to insist on Morley's *Gladstone* would be cruelty. Above all, they should read Walter Bagehot on the English Constitution. And those members of the Opposition who have, of late, been either talking of the Monarchy as a useless frippery, or pointing out (by way of an astonishing discovery) that Kings and Princes are featherless bipeds like the rest of us, and may even not be exceptional geniuses, or have been demanding that Monarchy and Coronation should be run on the cheap, would (unless they are hopelessly blinded by bigotry) especially benefit by Bagehot's chapters on the Monarchy.

His book was written seventy years ago. The Statute of Westminster had not yet been dreamt of. It was an era when even Disraeli—who today would expound more eloquently than any man the ideas of Rhodes, Chamberlain, and Kipling concerning the potentialities of the British Commonwealth of Nations—could airily contemplate a future in which the mature Colonies would drop off the parent tree “like ripe fruit.” Bagehot's thoughts were centred on the home country, but his

description of the functions of the Monarchy and his conclusions as to its indispensability are today not merely valid, but immeasurably strengthened by the development of an Empire in which the only constitutional link between the Mother Country and the Dominions is the Crown.

Bagehot was, as any man must be who can usefully examine such problems, a man of a scientific habit of mind. Sentiment did not influence his approach; but he would have been thoroughly unscientific if he had left out of consideration the extent to which sentiment affected other people. And it was typical of his boldness that he began by taking the words out of the republicans' mouths. "The use," he said,

of the Queen, in a dignified cap, is incalculable. Without her in England, the present English Government would fail and pass away. Most people when they read that the Queen walked on the slope at Windsor—that the Prince of Wales went to the Derby—have imagined that too much thought and prominence were given to little things. But they have been in error; and it is nice to trace how the actions of a retired widow and an unemployed youth become of such importance.

Two things may be noted about this preamble, or statement of counterclaim, which leads up to his vigorous defence.

The first is the reference to "most people." This need not be taken literally. Whatever at that time, and during the next years, may have been the sentiments of wild Republicans like Sir Charles Dilke and the devastating young Mayor of Birmingham; however widely-spread among the governing classes may have lingered a dislike of the Consort's solemn Germanism and the Queen's obstinate seclusion; however irritated certain politicians may have been at her stubbornness—it is extremely doubtful if a plebiscite of the masses (who, after all, are "most people") would ever, in spite of all the Radical cobblers, have failed to give a tremendous majority for the monarchical principle. Bagehot himself observes that "the women—one half of the human race at least—care fifty times more for a marriage than a ministry:" just as, I notice, Augustine Birrell, in his pleasant posthumous autobiography, contemplating the unhappy fate of his Education Bill, remarks that it is impossible in this country to make Education a really National Question, the population being much more interested in race meetings. In the second place it must be realized that Bagehot put bluntly what many,

if not most, people were saying about the Royal Family when it did not appear to be "functioning" hard enough. The Queen was in retreat and *crêpe*; her eldest son was allowed to do very little, so amused himself; and this was all before the Tranby Croft scandal, which was very hard on him and, incidentally, never ought to have been allowed to leak out.

Somebody once said that Christianity must be true because it has survived its professors. By the same token it may be said that the British Throne must be necessary because it has survived some of its occupants. Religious differences (not exclusively English, for the English have been complicated by the adjoining kingdom and principality) led to the execution of one king, the flight of another, and a change in the succession. Murderers, dissolute men, stupids, and foreigners who had little English have been tolerated, simply because the Throne must stand. There was one brief interval of eleven years during which a great, grim soldier, with a backing of Protestantism and money, held the country down until he died: but monarchy came back with a rush. Whatever the country's thinkers may have ex-cogitated, the country's instinct has always been: "Better any King—provided he is not too gross a tyrant—than none."

And it is significant that, during that Victorian discontent with the Court, the complaint was not that the Queen did not perform her strictly constitutional duties properly—for she was never slack about those, and the general public knew little of the perpetual tedium of consultations and document-signings—but that she didn't show herself enough in public. She worried herself almost to death about Russians and such like, and the conduct of her Ministers (sometimes being right through flashes of insight and long experience when they were wrong because of theory or expediency); but what the public wanted her to do was to open bridges, put on her jewels, and drive through the cities in open carriages so that she could be seen.

It isn't a question of right or wrong. It is a question of what is. "Things are what they are; their consequences will be what they will be: why then should we deceive ourselves?" The mass of men, and particularly of Englishmen, not being cold-blooded logicians, want something tangible to cling to, a rose for the buttonhole, a picture for the wall, a person to look

up to, and ritual and costume surrounding that person which will indicate in a vague way the things which are more than human and the things which are not bread alone—even when they know, with one part of them, that his present Majesty (for instance) was human enough to play good Lawn Tennis at Wimbledon and to fight as a junior officer at the Battle of Jutland. The reasoners (who usually leave most of their premises out) know little. They are pinched; and it was not for nothing that Campbell-Bannerman used privately to refer to John Morley (who did not in the end disdain the coronet) as “Priscilla.” A man knows more who saw, and did not despise, the flags in the slums, and the little tea-parties and presents for the children, during King George V’s Jubilee. There was an added impetus there. The personality of the King had reached them all over the wireless: the rich voice, the kindliness of one who to the poorest seemed to be a thoughtful member of their families. But had there not been a row about Queen Caroline (also a person, and a Royalty), going on at the moment, they would have demonstrated quite energetically enough about George IV; for they feel the need of a national, and now an Imperial, bond.

Babes and sucklings, in major matters, know a great deal more than chronically “anti” doctrinaires, in and out of Parliament. Some of these latter have been suggesting of late that perhaps, for the time being (I believe that even the pyrophagous Sir Stafford Cripps reluctantly goes as far as this), the Monarchy may be useful, and at least cannot be got rid of, but that the Coronation should be done cheaply, without display, especially as the world is in such a state and there is so much distress.

There was an argument once about a Box of Spikenard; the attitude of that disciple would certainly not be taken by the ordinary old lady in a Women’s Institute, by the crippled soldier in a Legion Branch, or by the plumber or bargee in a Wapping pub. If they had ever heard of the Master of the Buckhounds (unpaid) who was abolished in our time, they would like to have him back, with the buckhounds as well—who were abolished rather before their Masters, the last of whom, very suitably and picturesquely, was the late Lord Ribblesdale, otherwise known as “The Ancestor.” And they would like both Master

and hounds in the Procession, if possible ; and when I say " they " I mean we. Though it is shorn of its glories we still continue to insist on the Lord Mayor's Show, in spite of all the traffic-mongers ; and we should have it again as a Water-Pageant if they would only let us. Do we want the day of Coronation to be a day of mourning, whisperingly hushed through in black clothes ? Are there to be no more cakes and ale merely because the eternal Roundhead hates to see people being natural and enjoying themselves, and letting loose with colour and song—and is jaundiced with jealousy because he instinctively hates that anybody should be called a King when he is not one himself ? The mass of the people do not feel like that. They want a King. They don't want to be Kings. They want pageantry. They don't want to be in the centre of the pageantry. Pomp and ceremony are the outward and visible signs of their faith ; a starveling Coronation would cheat them. And they have a fairly shrewd idea that being a King is a sort of martyrdom. The head that wears a crown is not uneasy now for the same reasons as in the Middle Ages. It is unlikely (if I may with all respect appear flippant) that the Shakespeare (if any—which appears unlikely) of the next age will have to represent our present gracious Sovereign as deploring, on the stage of the Old Vic, the plots and stratagems of " our brothers of Gloucester and of Kent." But the unease is there still. Is there a human being alive in England so dense as to think that King George V really enjoyed leaving the quarter-deck for the throne ; or that anything else but a conviction about his duty would have induced him to do it ? When modern princes use the word " burden " they are using the right word.

The sophisticated may know more than the masses about the King's daily operations ; though they tend to forget that, even under our " limited " arrangement, a King may be all-important in a crisis. To the less sophisticated the King is the abiding thing (and none the worse because he has greatness thrust upon him by heredity, instead of climbing and intriguing towards it), and it matters little—or, rather, it is all to the good—that they are vague as to the King's sphere of action. Just after the Jubilee I heard an old man say in a village inn, over his bread-and-cheese and pint : " Now the Germans 'ave a man like 'Itler

it's just as well that we 'ave a man like King George." The confusion of functions didn't matter ; though, in a way, the remark did illustrate the latent power always within reach of our monarchs if they are wise enough to be worthy of it. What was significant was that the old man never dreamt of saying that we were lucky to be able to set against Herr Hitler so sagacious a man as the President of the Board of What-Not. To quote Bagehot again : " We have whole classes unable to comprehend the idea of a constitution—unable to feel the least attachment to impersonal laws." Thank God we have. There is more cement about it. When men get away from persons to paper constitutions the passion for change knows no end ; or the paper becomes as rigid as a brick wall. But Bagehot, remember, was doing his best against his own case. There were two men in him. The banker, the political scientist and the economist, in duty bound reasoned coldly, and treated the multitude as a herd viewed from above ; but the critic of poetry (and he was one of our best who was not a poet himself) was in the herd and felt the herd's desire for colour, unity, and personal loyalty. It has been written :

John Stuart Mill
By a great effort of will,
Overcame his natural *bonhomie*
And wrote *The Principles of Political Economy*.

Bagehot took his *bonhomie* into the study with him ; and, were he here today, would be an oracle for the Imperial Crown.

The prerogatives of our Kings may have varied from age to age, and their power and influence—which are very elastic—may have varied, according to circumstances of character and event, from individual to individual ; but their usefulness, by virtue of their mere existence, is more evident now than ever it was. We have on the one hand an enormous coloured Empire in which the dynastic habit of mind is ingrained ; we have on the other a great and growing White Empire of free nations, each of which regards our King as its own King, and is bound to us in no other legal way.

A legal bond alone would, under a strain, be of little avail. A sentimental bond alone—the bond of children to mother—as Chamberlain pointed out in his quixotic but rather confused

campaign, might not hold, were there a marked conflict of economic interests—though, in places, a community of defence interests has now crept in which he did not wholly foresee. But the romantic bond holds.

The Union Jack is not a very beautiful flag. The flag of St. George is a better one, though it must be admitted that all these repetitive tricolours, playing variations on the spectrum (even the Irish Free State having deserted Tara's harp for three stripes) are worse. But the farther one gets away from England the more the Union Jack means. "What do they know of England who only England know," appears, as we are informed in Kipling's autobiography, to have been suggested by his mother. It doesn't matter; it is true. The Union Jack here is a national flag. But to men newly arrived from forest, desert, or stinking bazaar in some port where it is flying, it is much more than that. It is the Old School Tie of the largest (and most mixed) Club in the world; and one that stands for peace, kindness, and fair play. It is the symbol of an outlook and not merely a badge. And the Crown and its wearer are in the same category: only more effective, since the Monarch is human. People in libraries or on tubs may theorize as much as they like; but the ordinary run of men, at the ship's tiller or the plough's tail, will always understand a man as ruler better than they will ever understand a constitution.

This always was true; it is truer now than ever when we have scattered Dominions with their own Parliaments, Cabinets, and Prime Ministers, all subject to frequent change, and all subject to factional frays. Our Prime Minister (we are about, reluctantly, to change him now) may be, at the moment, *primus inter pares*; time may come when he will not even be that. But how on earth could we expect Australians, Canadians, South Africans, New Zealanders, and hundreds of millions of people elsewhere to shift their personal allegiance according to the ebbs and flows of our party tides? What applies to a Prime Minister would apply equally to a President. A President "gets there" on a party vote; and very often because he wants to "get there." He is a politician and a party politician. Some politicians are good, some are bad, all are transient. A dynasty remains; and, human beings being what they are (however much individual royalties may shrink from the trappings), it should be right royally set off.

WHAT THE KING DOES*

BY GEOFFREY DENNIS

WHAT the King does is less important than what he is. His occupations are executive and political; representative and ceremonial; private and personal.

The three overlap. Some of his activities partake of both a political and a ceremonial nature, or lie on the border-line between the two. Not much of his so-called private life is devoid, is allowed by his subjects and masters to be devoid, of some measure of public significance.

Which of the Crown's powers are still the King's? What acts may he yet perform on his own initiative, and not as the mere agent or automaton of the Cabinet? Of the might of the mediæval KING, feudal lord of all land and lieges, marching man who led the nation to war, actual administrator who ordered its daily doings in time of peace, what residue remains to this shy twentieth-century civilian called by the same high name? Precisely what does this exalted strange personage, who in political theory is still almost everything, in practice in 1937 politically *do*?

Questions difficult to answer. The King himself could not answer them. If anyone could, it would be a learned constitutional lawyer doubled by a Prime Minister of long experience, clear judgment and in present office: a person who does not happen, never has happened, to exist.

The difficulties are of many kinds.

Between the personal monarch and the institutional monarch the dividing line is shadowy. Under our unwritten and ever-evolving constitution his personal powers are undetermined and indeterminate. They are always changing, in both kind and

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quantity. We are never up to date in our information. We know how much power each earlier Hanoverian exercised ; we know all that can, or need, be known about Queen Victoria's political activity and almost all about Edward VII's. But about George V's very much less, and must await the passage of time and the confidences of the great. Books are always behindhand. Ministers and courtiers are discreet, and the kings themselves discreeter. The only two English kings who held forth about their kingly rights were Scots ; a dialectical argumentative couple, father and son, one of whom pedantically sharpened the axe that came down upon the unfortunate head of the other.

The answers would depend on human, as well as political, factors. These are continually changing. On the tone, policy, and personnel of the party in power ; on the character of the Prime Minister of the moment ; on the character of the reigning king ; on how long he has reigned. Influence having been substituted for power as the Crown's mode of action, the individual influencing and the individuals influenced are the terms of the equation. These fluctuate.

The lawyers do not let themselves be discouraged by such difficulties. They compile their kingly *Cannots*—impressive lists of them.

The lists prove, briefly, that the great historic prerogatives of the king are precisely those prerogatives he may not exercise ; that the principal things he is supposed to be able to do are the principal things he cannot do. He cannot decide or control the general policy of the country. He cannot publicly express an opinion on matters of State. He cannot choose the Prime Minister, or the other ministers. He cannot dismiss them. He cannot dissolve Parliament. He cannot refuse his assent to a bill. He cannot attend meetings of the Cabinet. He cannot refuse to take the Cabinet's advice. He cannot take advice from persons outside the Cabinet. He cannot exercise his royal prerogative of mercy. He cannot cede territory. He cannot make war, peace, treaties, peers, bishops, judges. The king can make speeches, but not the King's Speech.

Some of these absolutes are doubtful.

The King can still influence policy. He can confidentially press a policy upon his Prime Minister, seek to dissuade him from

another, delay the execution of a third. George V required that second general election before he would give his consent to the creation of the Parliament Bill peers. If there is no single clear instance of any of Victoria's governments, still less a government of any of her successors, changing an important item in their programme to suit the monarch's personal taste, yet the Queen was not powerless. She was a permanent brake on (spoke in the wheel of) half her ministries. The Liberal ones.

When the party called to power has no undisputed leader, the King still has a say in choosing the Prime Minister. Victoria sent for Rosebery in preference to Harcourt. George V had a word in the selection of Baldwin in preference to Curzon; perhaps a big word in the replacement of Ramsay Labour by Ramsay National.

He has not quite lost the power of appointing, or at least successfully suggesting to the Prime Minister, individual members of the Cabinet. Balfour brought in some ministers on Edward VII's recommendation, Campbell-Bannerman at least one minister. How far, since then, the King has had a hand in Cabinet-making is not accurately known. As late as Edward VII he was believed to be influential, if he desired to be, in the choice of the Foreign Minister and the War Minister in particular.

His prerogative of dissolution is not obsolete. The Cabinet decides to dissolve Parliament, but it must get the King's consent. This is not always a formality, and a situation is possible in which he might refuse it; or in which, in consultation with the Prime Minister, his judgment one way or the other might be decisive. Whether or no he may decide a dissolution, he can certainly refuse one.—Can; but scarcely *will*. In all that touches the Parliament, the theoretical possibilities of the 1937 King's powers are different from the practical probabilities. Over against the Commons, and as regards power over them, it is the Prime Minister who has taken the old place of the King. (Who has taken the Prime Minister's? . . .)

His veto is dead; but he can still get small changes made in a bill.

He can, in a crisis, see leaders of the Opposition and in a measure mediate between them and the Government. As King

George saw Lord Lansdowne at the height of Peers versus People. . . .

Historians fix the date when this or that power was exercised for the last time. No sovereign since Queen Anne has vetoed a single bill ; none since Queen Elizabeth has vetoed more than one or two bills : she quashed forty-eight. None since Anne has attended a meeting of the Cabinet. None has been the real ruler of the country since William III, or decided main lines of national policy since George III. As late as George IV the king could really choose the Prime Minister. As late as 1885 there was a chance of a government that enjoyed the support of Parliament going out because it lacked the support of the Queen (and perhaps of the nation) ; but Gladstone could survive even Gordon. As late as 1893 a queen could secure a pointed change in a Queen's Speech : from Gladstone's reference to a bill for the better government of Ireland she forced him to delete the " better."

Yet no one can say that the last time a prerogative was exercised was the last time—will be the last time—it could have been exercised. The decline in the royal power is evident ; but no one can be sure that the decline will continue, or that a reverse process may not set in ; may not now be setting in. There are signs pointing both ways.

All that is sure and certain is the fact (regretted by some, approved by others) that, as long as there is a person in the State called *King*, some measure of influence and therefore power he must continue to possess. He can never become the pure rubber stamp of Whig desire. He will always know many people, see many people, hear many views, have access to many papers ; always be a man as well as a mechanism.

Throughout the most depressed period of the royal power, from, say, the death of the Prince Consort to the middle years of George V, the sovereign has continued to be something more than a cipher. The titular ruler's objections, suggestions, proposals for the modification of a measure or a policy have, in even the lowest hour, been listened to with respect by the political ruler ; and, added Asquith, with greater respect than suggestions from any other quarter whatsoever. He bears the glamorous name of King.

If he is ordinarily wise, when he has been on the throne during a few ministries he will have joined experience to glamour. Ministers come and go ; he stays. His time averages four times as long as theirs ; he can become four times as experienced. Victoria had ten Prime Ministers, and saw some twenty changes of government. No Prime Minister of hers was ever in power for more than six years at a stretch ; she was in power unbrokenly for sixty-four. She looked upon them as the inexperienced, and the ephemeral, part of government. They were temporary officers in the regiment ; she was on sentry duty for ever.

The King of England has almost no power left for evil : a good deal for good. . . .

Quite separate now is the sovereign's work as king—kings—of the Dominions. Imperial business takes every year a larger place in the royal time-table.

The Governors-General now representing not the Government of Great Britain nor the London Parliament but the King alone, he is in direct touch with them without any intervention of the home Cabinet. Free of the Prime Minister of England, he transacts regular business with the Dominion High Commissioners.

Of the gathering prestige of, and the new duties devolving upon, the Royal Family through its imperial role, two recent decisions afford, by their contrast, curious evidence. As late as 1928, the Council of State set up to perform the royal duties during King George's first illness included the Prime Minister and the Lord High Chancellor of England. But, in 1936, the Council of State appointed for King George's last illness included members of the Royal Family only. It was felt no longer suitable to include any subjects ; who would have been subjects of one of the King's countries, Great Britain, alone.

Whatever the precise position of the prerogatives and the present measure of the King's political powers may be—and it is quite unimportant—the exercise of these remains a considerable portion of What He Does, and takes up a considerable proportion of his *time*.

Of the Prime Minister's time also ; which a Prime Minister with a less lofty idea of the king's office than of his own—Balfour, perhaps, or Lloyd George—inclines to regard as so much time

wasted. Some of Victoria's Liberal Governments did have to expend rather a large part of their energies in quarrelling with the Court. "The Queen alone," groaned Mr. Gladstone, "is enough to kill any man."

How does the King perform his business of State?

In the first place by oral communication, interviews with—audiences granted to—his Prime Minister and the other ministers.

Queen Victoria, of course, worked chiefly by correspondence, that famous correspondence, the most interesting in royal records; and wrote, and underlined, more words than any other monarch in the history of the world. . . .

Ministers to whom the letters were addressed may sometimes have judged them less favourably. For they were inexorable; they were perpetual. Her authority had to be sought, and the Minister's reasons set forth at length and in writing, before any important step could be taken. The principal foreign despatches were written about line by line. It was irritating for the Minister, who regarded himself as the true sovereign; but there it was. There She was.

The staying and delaying that Victoria's existence involved was probably, in the great majority of cases, a good thing. A Prime Minister could bully his colleagues; he had to think out, and carefully and patiently and politely explain, the reason for his proposed action to the one person in the world who could, and did, bully *him*. It was probably a good thing. It made for clarity and, in foreign affairs, for safety.

Edward VII, no penman, did not show the same exclusive preference for his mother's method. He used, each in reasonable measure, the pen, the personal audience, the telephone and that increasingly important and hard-worked official and go-between, the royal Private Secretary. Letters to Edward VII from the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, or the Minister for War were still always in their own hand. He wrote on them "Appd. E.R.," or "Seen E.R." If he disagreed, or had suggestions to make, he jotted down his views, which the Private Secretary re-drafted—possibly bowdlerized—and sent back to the Minister.

George V's Prime Ministers, apparently, did not either see or write to him fully on most questions. One or two of them

treated him to the extent they dared, and that was possible, as the figure-head, Duke of Venice, or rubber stamp of their ideal. But in Parliament Bill days, and around the outbreak of the War, Asquith and his King were in continuous communication, oral and written. And at the end of the reign, when George had a firmer hand on things, audiences became more frequent again and the correspondence more important.

The King has business to transact with other principal men in the State besides the Cabinet ministers—with Officers of the Household, officers of the army and navy, ambassadors, prelates ; with high officials of the government departments.

Affairs and the world grow ever more complicated. The King's, like the Prime Minister's, familiarity with each separate department must inevitably grow less, and be confined to proportionately fewer aspects. Take the Foreign Office. George V's relation with this, the most august, the most traditionally royal Department of State, seems to have been confined to the following. He saw some despatches, and perhaps most of the very important ones ; occasionally he suggested a change. All appointments of ambassadors, ministers, and counsellors (though not of even the highest Foreign Office officials) were submitted to him. The submissions were pretty well formal, except that for a few particular nominations, for example, to the Scandinavian Courts where the Royal Family has kinship, His Majesty's pleasure was genuinely taken. Proposals for orders and decorations went to the Palace always. In addition to the Secretary of State, the King occasionally received the highest officials. This, no doubt, was less than his father had had to do with that particular department ; George, unlike Edward, was not more interested in the Foreign Office, or in the War Office, than in the other ministries. The ruler of the greatest empire in history never once set foot in his Department of War during the greatest war in history.

His work, of course, is done mainly at the Palace. There he gives audience ; there he reads the innumerable papers of all sorts that he still must read ; there he finds time, as best he may, to reflect about what he hears and reads.

Much mere signing is still a royal burden : glorified clerical work. There is less of it than there was. If the Royal Sign

Manual is still required for the most important executive acts, of more trivial papers the sovereign's pen has gradually been relieved. Queen Victoria signed over 60,000 documents a year ; George V not a hundred a day.

The King no longer signs all officers' commissions with his own tired hand. Victoria was once sixteen thousand commissions in arrears, and used to sit up far into the night to work them off : many officers used to receive their promotion warrants after they had left the army. The Great Queen is the most unliterary person in history who suffered from writer's cramp.

The importance of what he Is gaining continuously upon the importance of what he Does, a 1937 king who immersed himself in papers as deeply as Victoria would scarcely be doing his duty. It would leave him no time for far more necessary duties.

Then there are the things the King does because of what he is. All the formal, and representative, and ceremonial, duties of the Crown. The rites of the nation. . . .

Some of these are essential, and many of them can be looked upon as useful, activities. Somebody must perform them. The fact that Majesty performs them adds significance, solemnity or *éclat* to the events ; delights or placates the persons received or honoured ; aids all the good causes, encourages the people who are directly concerned in them, and arouses the interest and opens the purses of others. Royalty gives impetus to every cause. In the sun of Majesty's favour things go with more of a swing. You feel your job honoured, and do it better.

Of the ceremonies, some are the most brilliant left in the world, the Pope of Rome alone competing : the pomp and ritual of the opening of Parliament ; the glittering scene in the Throne Room at a Court ; a State banquet at the Castle, with the Beef-eaters in lines, the gold plate, the diamonds, the historic and majestic setting ; the unique Coronation—and for us, the mob, admitted to none of these, gorgeous progresses and processions that suffice us.

Whether Majesty itself enjoys the shows will depend on temperament. Victoria was not partial to them. Her son enjoyed every moment of them. His son played the chief part in them so successfully that we never asked ourselves whether he was enjoying himself or not ; one took his doing his duty

for granted. His son, again, is said not to take great pleasure in the ceremonial side.

It must sometimes be tedious ; even though the technique of royalty in suffering bores and chores gladly is exceedingly highly developed.

*What infinite heart's-ease must kings neglect
That private men enjoy ! And what have kings
That private have not too—save ceremony,
Save general ceremony ?*

The dullest of deputations must be received with an alert smile ; each individual bore given a handshake and a sentence or two of appropriate and interested comment, and sent away happy, and hot royalist. The King will usually have been coached in the subject by one of his secretaries ; even so, the proportion of sense he talks is surprising. Memory and quick assimilation of a subject are of course chief objectives of his training. Uncle Bertie and nephew Willie, so unlike in most ways, were alike in their genius for the successful superficiality their jobs required of them.

All day long he has to be changing clothes and uniforms ; adapting himself to different aspects of Is, performing variant feats of Does. All day long he has to be gracious and smiling ; at the end of the day, dead tired, half dazed perhaps, he must not show it.

“ Tribulation and royalty and patience.”

Last of all, the King's own private life remains. Little of it remains. Of an individual existence free and unwatched, following his own bent and bearings, his time and body and soul his own, very little indeed remains.

Leave it to him.

KOREA FROM A NUNNERY WINDOW

BY WILLARD PRICE

WE sat in a nunnery on a mountain side and looked out over the Korean landscape. We ate pine nuts and talked politics.

"You now see before you a terrible example," said the wise old abbess who had known the world and rejected it. Her young feet had even trod Piccadilly. Her old feet preferred the paths among the pines. In this ancient temple there were no gramophones, radios, telephones, electric lights. But there was a Buddha to give one peace, a heated floor to comfort one's bones, and a few books in English and German nudging the sutras on the shelf. And, although the abbess had refused an invitation to lecture at an American college, she took delight in haranguing the travellers who stopped to spend the night at the convent.

"If you want to know what the Japanese will do in Manchuria and in North China . . . look! Here it lies before you. Poor little farms, houses like cow-sheds. The Japanese have been in Korea now for three decades. They have had an opportunity to show what they could so. And today the farmers—and that means eighty-three per cent. of the people of Korea—are worse off then they were before."

The Japanese officer drew in his breath apologetically. "That is quite true," he said. He evidently knew that the only possible way to win an elderly lady to a new point of view is to agree to her old one. "We have not done very well with Korea. It was our first real experiment in colonization. Yes—Formosa—but that was a small matter compared with this. And our mistakes bear down most heavily upon the farmers. See how the stock manipulators lower the price of rice just before the farmer sells his crop, and raise it just after he sells. And the government can't, or won't, stop it. Cheap manufactured goods take the place of the things the farmer used to make by hand.

He buys rubber shoes instead of making his own out of rawhide or straw."

"Ah, but," said the abbess, "I wouldn't go without my rubber shoes. They keep my feet dry. The old ones never did."

"The farmer has been changed from a maker to a buyer, and since he has no money to buy with, his lot becomes worse every year," insisted the Japanese.

The American suggested that this condition was not peculiar to Korea. In many countries the status of the farmer has been growing steadily worse as industrialization progresses. He always seems to be in the backwash of civilization. And the stronger the current, the stronger the backwash.

"But is the current so strong in Korea?" The officer said it with an air of great discouragement.

"Of course it is," the abbess admitted. "Your people have done wonders here. Wonders! Look at that railroad line in the valley. Those fine roads. Those telegraph and telephone lines. Electric power lines. Dikes along that river—it used to break loose like a demon every spring. But no more. Thousands of trees planted on that mountain . . ."

The Japanese officer sat on his hands which were pressed against the heated floor. He could now safely leave the defence of Japan to the sense of justice of the abbess. She talked on while dusk deepened, while the little bean-oil lamps were being lighted (for though the blessings of civilization were wonderful for the valley and for Korea, they would never be admitted to the convent), and while we drew up to a foot-high circular table in the centre of which was a vast bowl of steaming rice girdled by small bowls each containing a pickle—pickled mushrooms, pickled seaweed, pickled cabbage, pickled beans, pickled pine nuts, pickled millet seeds, and pickled maple leaves. She paused only long enough to ask grace beautifully and simply by bowing the head and striking an ancient bronze bell with a deer's horn. The bell had hardly completed its message of prayer echoing out of past ages before the abbess burst forth again about tractors, trams and bank deposits. Blessed with an active mind and many visitors, she knew what was going on.

And, if I may supplement her observations with facts obtained from many other sources during rather extensive travels through

the peninsula, the credit side of Japan's ledger in Korea may be briefly summarized as follows.

Life has been made safer. Epidemics are now rare, smallpox is almost gone, asylums house lepers who formerly roamed abroad, pure water is provided in cities. The witches and magicians who were formerly the only practitioners of medicine are giving way to licensed physicians. There is now one physician to every eight thousand people. That seems scanty provision, but it is much better than none.

With the drain of disease curbed, the population now grows rapidly. Japan established a protectorate over Korea in 1905 and annexed the country in 1910. The population, thirteen million in 1910, is now twenty-two million. The rate of increase even exceeds that of Japan, whose own rate is sufficient to bewilder the government and distress the world. China's rate falls far below—for although she gives birth to more, she buries more. Rapid increase is by no means a certain blessing, but it at least indicates that living conditions have improved.

What of mental progress? Outside of the excellent institutions conducted by missionaries, there were formerly no schools except those teaching Chinese classics. Japan introduced such subjects as arithmetic, geography, Japanese language, and practical agriculture. While in 1910 there were only one hundred common schools, they now number more than two thousand with half a million students. This is an excellent record as compared with Britain's in India or America's in the Philippines, but it still leaves much to be accomplished. Two million Korean children of school age are without schools.

Korea's foreign trade has increased seventeen times since 1910. Before annexation the annual trade was about fifty million yen; now it is a billion yen. Most of her exports go to Japan: Japan buys almost as much from Korea as she sells to her. America, on the contrary, buys only one-tenth as much as she sells. Britain also has been buying very little from Korea—and it is therefore not surprising that her sales to Korea have been sliding steadily towards vanishing—point.

After all, the "open door" of Asia is a revolving door. It opens inward only as much and as fast as it opens outward. The secret of Japan's economic success in Asia is that she takes

as much as she gives. Her trade with China rests upon a fairly even keel—a balance of exports and imports. The same is true of her trade with Manchukuo—and with Korea. Fundamentally it is not the Japanese army which is merging Japan and the Asiatic continent—but the fact that each needs what the other has. Soldiers, who imagine themselves the pilots of destiny, are but chips on the economic tide.

Korea's resources are made to order for Japan. Every year about forty million yen worth of gold is mined, ten million of coal, twelve million of iron, and the largest production of graphite in the world. Korea is believed to be as richly mineralized as Mexico. Industrial production in Korea has increased nineteen times since annexation. Bank deposits are twenty times as large.

"Now, that is all splendid," said the abbess after recounting such facts as the foregoing, minus the figures. "But where has this new wealth gone? It has gone to enrich the rich. The great men of the cities become richer and the small men of the country become poorer. You say it's because this is an industrial age . . . the same thing is happening all over the world. In England, in America, in Japan too, the farmers are in trouble. Perhaps . . .—but you come with me down to the farms tomorrow morning and tell me whether you have ever seen suffering like this."

I accepted the invitation. And we went to our rest. If it can be called rest to lie on a stone floor with a wooden block as a pillow. Fortunately the floor was heated. But there was nothing to mitigate the harshness of that pillow. It was not even made of soft wood. Every hour it became firmer, impressing itself more deeply upon the skull and memory, so that the night remains unforgettable.

Buddhism, so ornamental in some lands, has in Korea become as plain and hard as that pillow. The priests and nuns were long ago removed by Korean rulers who feared their political power. They now live as hermits, in unadorned temples, on the edge of poverty, giving nothing to the world and taking little from it. Our abbess was somewhat unusual—most of the clergy have become ignorant and shiftless, flotsam of a former glory. Half a million Koreans have become Christians. The

rest of the twenty-two million are inclined to rely upon the abracadabra of their animistic wizards and witches rather than upon the rites of Buddhism.

Today Buddhist priests are being sent from Japan in an effort to regenerate Korean Buddhism. The newcomers have ideals . . . but perhaps not quite so much the ideals of Gautama Buddha as the ideals of Yamato Damashii, the spirit of devotion to the divine Emperor. Buddhism as well as Shinto in Japan has been bent to the national purpose. Japanese priests, who are more Japanese than priests, can hardly meet their Korean brothers on a common platform of belief . . . therefore their work is hard.

Moonlight filtered through the translucent paper windows into the altar room which served also as a guest room. It illuminated the huge drum which, suspended from the ceiling, seemed to float in mid-air. It picked out high lights on the polished brass candlesticks and the brass incense bowl on the altar. It gave an even more remote air than usual to the face of the little gilt Buddha who sat above the altar shelf, immune from the distress and dust of this world in a glass case. It made the great wooden pillars which supported the heavy thatch roof seem like misty columns of incense.

Then dawn hardened everything into reality, the pigs—which the nuns are too pious to eat but not too pious to raise for sale to sinners—began to grunt, wooden bowls began to rattle and firewood to crackle in the kitchen.

The Japanese rose and greeted the morn with a pæan of hawking and gargling. The abbess achieved slight competition with the recitation of a sutra, but did better when she attacked the great drum. Pounding it with one drumstick, and a small floor-drum with another, she stirringly proclaimed to the peasants of the valleys beneath that Buddha was still on his lotus flower and all was well with the world. Perhaps there was a minor message to the effect that it might be well to set aside a penny or two for the nuns who would come later in the day to collect alms.

After the pickled breakfast, the abbess donned her overcoat and beaver hat. She put on her Japanese rubber shoes. She brought out a London-made brief case which had won admittance

to this retreat only because it was such a convenient receptacle for alms in cash or kind. We descended to the farms. Where the steep path met the plain, we came upon a white-clad farmer prying pieces of bark from a tree-trunk. "His breakfast," said the abbess. She spoke to him, and we went with him to his house. He was a large-boned man, perhaps in his thirties, but he walked so deliberately that even the old abbess had difficulty in slowing her pace to match his. We came to a forlorn little beehive of a house—a beehive in appearance only, not in any air of activity. There was a pig-pen but no pig. A chicken coop but no chickens. A scrawny courtyard with nothing in it except a large empty jar which had once held the winter's store of pickle, now exhausted. The house had mud walls, mud-and-straw roof, and mud floors. Outside the house was a mud stove in which some pine needles were smouldering. The heat passed through a mud conduit to the space beneath the floors and the smoke came out of a mud chimney which rose from the ground four feet outside the opposite wall of the house.

We entered. A woman was ironing—beating with two clubs a white garment, slightly moistened, laid across a flat stone. She ceased her tattoo and came to greet the abbess. She took some of the bark, dropped down beside a small feverish form that lay on a pallet, and began to feed the bark to her son. The child's stomach was a great bloated mound. A sign, not of plenty, but of poisoning. "These people are fortunate," said the abbess. "Their landlord has not turned them out. I could show you much worse 'spring suffering' than this."

The season most rhapsodized by poets is known to Korean tenant farmers as the time of "spring suffering." And most farmers are tenant farmers. Only four per cent. of the farming families own their land (as against fourteen per cent. in Japan, and vastly higher percentages in Europe and the United States). Tenants must pay half of their crop as rental. This payment is made in the autumn immediately after harvest. Out of the other half the tenant must make his landlord an additional "present," pay the taxes, buy seed and fertilizer, and pay interest charges on old debts. Very little of the crop is left to feed the family through the year. The supply gives out in mid-

winter or early spring. Then comes "spring suffering." For the majority of the tenant population the time of most desperate need is from March to June inclusive. Then bark, roots, acorns, grass, weeds, become food, and thousands die of malnutrition, poisoning or downright starvation. In desperate straits, the tenant settles himself still further into the mire by borrowing more money from the usurers—if he can get it.

"They will not lend me any money," our host told the abbess.

"Perhaps that is just as well for you," replied the abbess cheerfully. "How much do you owe now?"

"About ninety yen."

"What interest do you have to pay?"

"They knew my father—so I got a low rate. Three per cent."

But that means three per cent. a month. Thirty-six per cent. a year. Comparatively he was lucky, since four per cent. a month, forty-eight per cent. a year, is not unusual.

"But whatever made you borrow so much as ninety yen?"

"I didn't. I borrowed ten yen. That was long ago. In good years I paid the interest and in bad years I couldn't. Altogether I have paid seventy yen in interest. And I have ninety left to pay."

Thus a trivial debt of ten yen (about 12 shillings) multiplies itself endlessly, and is sometimes passed down from generation to generation, always rolling larger. Of course, if the farmer has any land or other possessions, they are confiscated to pay the debt. Thus, in the words of the official Report on Administration of Chosen, "seizure of land from defenceless owners in Chosen has been the habit." The land has passed into the hands of men who do not work it—in fact, many of them live far from their property and do nothing but collect. Half of the cultivable land of the whole country is owned by twenty thousand absentee landlords. It is taken for granted that a farmer will be in debt. Eighty per cent. of the farming community of Korea, according to the official Japan Year Book, has debts, bearing interest at three per cent. or four per cent. a month.

There was nothing surprising to the abbess in the condition of this family. Her only surprise was indicated in her next question:

"How did it happen that you borrowed only once?"

"We had two girls we could use."

The abbess, translating his answer to me, explained that he was euphemistically stating that he had sold two of his daughters.

"Did they become dancing girls?" she inquired.

"No, no," the man laughed. "They had no talent. They could only do what any woman can do." One had been taken by a house of prostitution. The other was drudge in a landlord's kitchen.

Both had been sold outright. The proceeds had served to keep the rest of the family alive—and the girls were fed. Slavery seemed better than starvation. Slaves rarely try to escape—since there is nothing better to which they may escape. Moreover, they would be promptly returned to their owners. Japanese law does not hold them bound. But custom does. And in a primitive and ignorant society, custom is stronger than law. The Japanese, fearing to stir up unnecessary trouble, do not flout Korean custom, except where it is to their industrial or political advantage to do so. Their stand against slavery is further weakened by the fact that in Japan itself the merchandizing of daughters by destitute farmers is not uncommon.

We went on to other houses. The net impression was one of abject resignation. The people did nothing because it seemed hopeless, and their lot was hopeless because they did nothing.

The degradation of the peasant is increased by ignorance and superstition.

Screams of agony issuing from a little mole of a house drew us thither. We entered without ceremony—but immediate protests from the inmates caused the male visitor to retire in confusion. Yet he had seen enough to leave a permanent scar on memory. A woman in labour lay on the floor. Across her abdomen had been placed a board, and upon either end of it sat a girl, see-sawing to force delivery, while the unhappy woman shrieked with pain. A dirty midwife stood by, directing the proceedings.

Other phases of native medical practice are as primitive. They are usually tinctured strongly by superstition. In the village we visited was a small hill crowned by a "devil-house." From it came the sound of drumming and chanting. The abbess was willing that I should satisfy a natural curiosity, but would not

go with me. Professional ethics forbade. The Buddhist nun could not politely intrude into the shrine of the devil-priestess. I climbed to the devil-house, one side of which was thrown open. A baby lay on the floor, eyes closed. Over it bent a woman, probably its mother, and several relatives, watching for any movement. A *mudan* or sorceress beat a drum—another danced with much mystic waving of hands. Both chanted incessantly. The baby did not stir, and I rejoined the abbess. She happily showed me the contents of her brief case—two potatoes, some pickles, a live and lively chicken. She was ready to return to the convent.

Buddhism in Korea does nothing to lift the pall of medical superstition and suffering. Japanese doctors and health services are doing much. The work of American mission doctors has been brilliant. But perhaps the greatest credit of all is due to the young Korean doctors of the new school, for they alone have climbed steeply from an abyss. The fathers of some of them are old-time practitioners. It means that these young men have spanned a thousand years in medical school. But there are as yet only a few hundred such men.

The plain truth is that Korea, while it has made a splendid beginning, is still in a pitiable plight. Millions have no doctors, no hospitals, no schools and, worst of all, no reason for ambition. Effort seems to get them nowhere. While pushing forward they go backward.

The most unfortunate aspect [admits the *Japan Times*] has been the decline of the status of the farming population which has taken place hand in hand with increase in production of agricultural produce and even with increased investments and general raising of the land wealth of the country. . . . We thus witness in Chosen a development which has taken place to a degree in Japan also, namely, the welfare of the agrarians being sacrificed for progress in the urban centres.

It would be unfair not to mention the splendid "Self-help Movement" which is bringing relief to some farm communities. It was inaugurated by the government of Korea in 1933. Since the idea has somehow got round the world that everything takes five years to do, no more, no less, this also is a "five-year-plan." The idea is to develop model villages which will serve as examples to surrounding villages. Forty-six hundred villages in all parts of Korea were selected, and their transformation has been accom-

plished under Japanese advisers. Under the challenging motto "Work!" the villagers have been stimulated to produce more and live better.

Note well, however, that this excellent movement is one of *self-help*. Japan has learned from the West how to make the farmer hold up the State, though he groan under the burden. This is not a colonial policy, but is applied only to farmers in the Japanese homeland. "Actual relief lies not so much in financial grants from the Treasury, but in the spirit of initiative on the part of the farming population," said Premier Okada in 1935. The next year he barely escaped assassination at the hands of young army officers, self-appointed champions of the farmers. Viscount Saito, when starving farmers appealed for help, sent them a sample of his hand-writing as an inspiration. This was received with a profound show of appreciation. A few months later the donor was assassinated. Even the great, liberal-minded Finance Minister Takahashi, in his New Year's message in 1936, said, "I shall be gratified to see the farming community rise to prosperity through its own efforts." That was in January—he was assassinated in February. Agrarian resentment was not the only cause for these assassinations, but it was one of the chief. But Japan is used to all this. For a Japanese statesman, to fall at the hand of an assassin is to die a natural death. Japan calmly continues to tax the farmer to raise money to pay out in large grants to industries, especially those industries which gird Japan for the coming test of war strength in the Far East.

Korea is an economic burden to Japan. More than a quarter of a century under Japanese administration, it still requires financial help. It is a luxury. The only way to get it out of the luxury class is by industrial development. The eighty-three per cent. must wait until this is accomplished. So reasons Japan, and she will reason in the same way in Manchukuo, North China, and any other Oriental lands in which she may later become concerned. Japan has many enemies. A ring of steel must be erected round the Japanese Empire. All human sinews must be taxed to the utmost to provide the sinews of war. War sinews include iron, coal, oil, transportation, strong banks, active export trade in manufactured goods to pay for the things Japan needs from abroad. Of course, food is also necessary; but the urge

of starvation is trusted to impel the farmers, or the farmers' wives and children after the men have gone to the front, to supply enough food.

In the operation of this plan, no comfort lies ahead for Eastern Asia. Comfort is the last consideration—consolidation of the imperial power is the first. Japan means to use the agrarian eighty per cent. of the 122,000,000 people of Korea, Manchukuo and North China to subsidize industry and "defence." We may expect to see the suffering of the many become more intense, the wealth of the few greater, the banks stronger, money sounder, roads and railroads better, mines deeper, cities larger, Japanese advisers more numerous, native sons in high posts fewer, mechanical education wider and academic education narrower, the average life poorer, the state richer.

Some day when the objectives of national ambition have been reached, the multitude may come to have a share in the painfully acquired prosperity of the Empire—but that time is far distant.

I returned to the convent with the abbess. We dined upon the chicken she had brought up in her brief case. We seemed far removed from the noise and misery of the valley.

"Yes," said the abbess, "this Western civilization of yours which Japan has adopted may be very fine . . . but not for me!"

She gazed about comfortably at the solid old pillars of the altar room and the complacent Buddha in the glass case.

STRESSES IN CENTRAL EUROPE

BY WICKHAM STEED

WHAT is "Central Europe?" The name usually suggests the countries in or bordering upon the Danubian Basin, that is to say, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania. Geographically the suggestion is fairly accurate; politically it is too restricted. Though the concept "Central Europe" differs historically and actually from the German concept of "Middle Europe," it ought to imply a much wider range of interests and influences than those associated with the Danubian region. In fact an adequate concept of "Central Europe," and of the political and economic stresses that affect it, should include the greater part of the area that lies between the eighth and the fortieth meridians of east longitude, and the sixty-fourth and thirty-sixth parallels of northern latitude. Within this area are Germany, Italy, Poland, Scandinavia, the Baltic States, Finland, Western Russia, the Black Sea, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece. All of them, and not they alone, may be exposed to the action and reaction of events in Danubian "Central Europe."

Indeed the problem of Central Europe is essentially the problem of Europe as a whole. This came to be clearly, albeit tardily, understood in the course of the Great War. It was understood much earlier by the few students of international affairs who, from 1900 onwards, perceived the meaning of pan-Germanism. Yet it was not until the beginning of 1918 that the chance of Allied victory was seen to depend upon the liberation of the subject Hapsburg peoples and upon the establishment, on and around what had been the territory of the Hapsburg Monarchy, of a number of smaller independent States which could be trusted to defend their freedom against all attempts to bring the Central European region under the overlordship of any one dominant Power.

The talk of the "Balkanisation" of Central Europe that has been so loud in recent years leaves this fundamental truth out of account. Those who, knowing nothing of the old Hapsburg Monarchy, likewise bewail its "dismemberment by the Peace Conference" give themselves a certificate of comprehensive ignorance. The Hapsburg Monarchy was never "dismembered" by the Peace Conference. It exploded from within before any Armistice was or could be signed either on the Danube or in the West. The Peace Conference found itself confronted with accomplished facts and in the presence of forces with which most of the Allied delegates were neither competent nor able to deal. Many of those forces are at work today; and it is mainly they which determine, positively and negatively, what I have called the "stresses" in Central Europe.

In this country it has of late been the fashion to talk and to write as though those stresses could hardly affect us. Mr. Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, seems not to be in this fashion—or has begun to set another and less foolish fashion. In a speech at Liverpool on April 12th he quoted at some length from the *communiqué* issued at the close of the Little Entente Conference in Belgrade on April 2nd, and expressed his cordial concurrence with the principles of policy which it laid down for Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania. The purport and tenor of this *communiqué*, Mr. Eden declared, could be cordially endorsed by the Government and people of this country. The Little Entente Powers had reaffirmed their devotion to the League of Nations. They had recorded their determination to "continue to work for a general reconciliation of all European States and for the avoidance of war;" and they had added, in Mr. Eden's view, wisely: "This spirit of conciliation is not a sign of weakness, and the three States are at all times ready to defend their national rights." They were "firmly opposed to any kind of international ideological conflict, and would not join either of the *blocs* to which such conflict might give rise." The domestic systems of independent States must be mutually respected, and this principle would dictate Little Entente policy toward the Spanish conflict.

Mr. Eden thought these principles sound. But the soundness of policy cannot ensure success unless its principles be firmly

and wisely applied. While nobody in this country questions, for instance, the soundness of the principle of not intervening in the Spanish conflict, not a few question the wisdom of His Majesty's Ministers in the application of it. When they began by putting an embargo upon the purchase of arms and munitions in Great Britain by the Spanish Government, whose Ambassador was, and still is, accredited to the Court of St. James's, they threw away with both hands the only means of inducing interventionist countries to enter promptly into a valid non-intervention agreement. It was as though a lion should bite off its paws and break its teeth by way of impressing hyenas with its pacific intentions. The countries of the Little Entente upon whose mingled firmness and wisdom the future of Central Europe, that is to say, of Europe may depend, have failed, as Mr. Eden doubtless knows, to admire our behaviour. They feel the new strain it has brought into a precarious situation.

The question is whether they can in the long run withstand the strain, whether they will not, singly or jointly, break under it unless they be supported from without. Not so very long ago the British public was assured by a well-known writer that Czechoslovakia is formed like a sausage ready to be cut up, and that it is much less the rebirth of an ancient State than a political abortion. Nazi propaganda would also have us believe that the creation of Thomas Masaryk is a poor thing as compared with the creation of Adolf Hitler. There have been signs of apparent disintegration in the Little Entente. Yugoslavia has seen fit to conclude special agreements with Bulgaria and Italy, neither of whom have, in the past, been distinguished by enthusiastic devotion to the post-War settlement in Central Europe. Doubts have also been felt and encouraged about the fidelity of Rumania, especially since King Carol suddenly caused M. Titulescu to be dropped from the Rumanian Cabinet on August 30th last year.

After the election of Dr. Benesh to the Presidency of the Czechoslovak Republic in December, 1935, M. Titulescu had been looked upon as the Foreign Minister of the Little Entente. Besides helping to transform the Entente into a diplomatic and political unit on the morrow of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's and Sir John Simon's ill-starred advocacy of a revisionist Four-Power Pact in March, 1933, M. Titulescu was instrumental in

improving the relations between Rumania and Soviet Russia, and helped to form the Balkan Entente between Rumania, Yugoslavia, Turkey, and Greece.

So when he was unceremoniously discarded during a severe illness, people in Rome and Berlin rubbed their hands. Their fond anticipations were not destined to be fulfilled. The visits of President Benesh to Bucharest and of King Carol to Prague last year tended to consolidate the relationship between their two countries, while the activities of the Fascist-Nazi "Iron Guard" in Rumania—heavily subsidised by Germany—ended by disquieting King Carol and his new advisers. Nothing in Rumania has gone quite "according to plan," and a strong revulsion of popular feeling in favour of Titulescu is now noticeable in many quarters.

In any event it is premature to suppose that his influence upon the affairs of his country, or of Central Europe, has become negligible. On April 11th he made at Cap Martin a speech—the first since his recovery—which deserves attention. Advocating an international economic agreement he insisted that it must be based upon respect for the territorial *status quo*, since on that basis alone is peace possible, and that it could not be attained by bilateral conventions between States. There must be a general convention under the auspices of the League. No country, he said, would agree to make the sacrifices necessary for an equitable international agreement save in the measure in which it felt sure that its territory would be intangible. The more frontiers were menaced, the more would they be defended by increasing the obstacles to economic intercourse which already exist. It was not by putting frontier divisions in one place rather than in another but by rising above frontier divisions that the nations would find the way to peaceful co-operation. Notwithstanding that the League of Nations had suffered many a defeat, M. Titulescu affirmed his belief in the rapid renewal of its moral authority without essential change of its Covenant. Experience had shown that economic sanctions alone are ineffectual. On the other hand, it was clear that a universal obligation to make war against any aggressor is impossible of fulfilment. Therefore Europe should be divided into security zones in which the obligation of defending a victim of aggression

would devolve upon countries immediately interested. Economic "sanctions" should be universal, and military sanctions should be regional, but the two should work together. On this basis the League could be made a political reality capable of bringing about international economic agreement.

Between the views of M. Titulescu and those of President Benesh and M. Krofta, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, the difference is probably small. The practical issue is not whether these views are sound but whether practical effect will or can be given to them. In matters Central European, sobriety of thought is even more necessary than elsewhere. What are the chances that Central Europe may escape some violent disturbance of the peace in the near future? Will the notorious German preparations for attack upon Czechoslovakia be pushed to their logical conclusion or not? If they are, will Soviet Russia be ready and able to lend the Czechoslovaks effective aid? Will France act up to the spirit and the letter of the Franco-Czechoslovak alliance? If she does, what will our position be? Will Italy look with favour upon what might be a successful German attempt to overrun Bohemia, absorb Austria, dominate Hungary, threaten the Adriatic, obtain control of Rumanian oil fields and to menace Russia from the South? And what will Poland do?

To none of these questions can a definite answer be given. Some weeks ago a somewhat lively meeting was held at the "Brown House," the Nazi headquarters in Munich. The more go-ahead spirits advocated prompt action against Czechoslovakia, urging that the principle of non-intervention which the British Government had laid down in regard to Spain could be invoked in favour of a rising by the Henlein party in Czechoslovakia against the State and that German Nazi "volunteers" could do the rest. Against these arguments the more prudent Nazis entered a *caveat*. Spain, they argued, is a peninsula at the far end of Europe, whereas Czechoslovakia is in the very core of Europe. It would be folly to suppose that German intervention in Czechoslovakia, by "volunteers" or otherwise, could fail to bring on a general conflict, and for this general conflict the German army was not yet ready. So the meeting ended with the preliminary discomfiture of the more eager Nazis; and, if there be truth in the reports that experience in Spain has not proved

German tanks and aircraft to be the best of their kind, this preliminary discomfiture may be prolonged.

Then there is Hungary. In all Nazi plans against Czechoslovakia the active co-operation of Hungary has been assumed as a known and certain factor. Yet of late there have been heart-searchings and misgivings among the Magyars. There, as elsewhere, Nazi propaganda has lacked discretion. The Magyars may hate the Czechs and yearn to regain Hungary's former Slovak territory. They may also look forward to the day when a good part if not the whole of Transylvania will be restored to the Lands of St. Stephen's Crown. But they do not quite relish the idea of becoming a mere Magyar patch in a German estate. Some—to vary the metaphor—wonder whether the fire might not be even less comfortable than the frying-pan; and the setbacks which Nazi propaganda has suffered by the victory of M. van Zeeland over M. Degrelle at Brussels and by the issue of General Hertzog's proclamation against the Nazis in South West Africa have not passed unnoticed at Budapest.

Then there are other elements of uncertainty. Early last February the Foreign Secretary of Finland, M. Holsti, a statesman of judgment and perspicacity, paid a visit to Moscow. On his return he disavowed in a public statement any desire or intention that Finland should join either a Communist or an anti-Communist front in Europe.

"The front which I wish to strengthen," he added, "is the front of the democratic Powers, and especially of Great Britain, France, the Scandinavian countries, and the League countries in general. . . . I wanted to dispel the anxieties felt in Moscow that Finland had made secret arrangements with a Great Power to be the jumping-off place for an attack upon the Soviet Union. No such secret arrangements exist, and the Finnish Government has no plans for warlike adventures of any kind."

From Finland in the extreme north of Central Europe to Italy in the extreme South the distance seems considerable. Yet nothing that bears upon the chances of German military adventure can be a matter of indifference to Signor Mussolini. The "Berlin-Rome" axis may rest upon analogous "ideological" supports at each end without losing elasticity, flexibility or even a tendency to "kink" in the middle; and, if any credibility attaches to reports recently published in Vienna from a source

in Rome which is not out of touch with Italian propagandist views, the recent Italo-Yugoslav agreement may be in the nature of a "kink." One of these reports says bluntly that the new economic policy of Italy towards Yugoslavia and the Little Entente will be accompanied by a corresponding politico-economic arrangement between Austria and Czechoslovakia. The agreement of Belgrade will be a point of crystallisation for the trade currents that flow from the Moldau and the Danube and link the Danube Basin with the Adriatic and the Black Sea. In this way, it is suggested, Central Europe and the Adriatic may defend themselves against the expansionist policy of Germany which runs, now as before, along the line from Hamburg to Istanbul, and aims at mastery in the Balkans.

If ideas like these are really entertained in Rome they would throw a somewhat different light upon the Italo-Yugoslav agreement, and might not be without significance for the future relationship of the Little Entente, no less than of Hungary and Austria, with Italy. They will hardly be noted with undisguised approval in Berlin, especially in view of the remarkable efforts made by Dr. Schacht in recent years to control the Balkans economically by "buying" foodstuffs from them in great quantities and "paying off" their frozen credits in German armaments, machinery, and other products. Against this control a feeling of resentment has certainly grown up in more than one Balkan country. But it remains to be seen whether Germany will readily acquiesce in the thrusting of an Italo-Central European economic barrier athwart the old pan-German line of advance to South Eastern Europe.

In reality the future of Central Europe depends less upon these thrusts and counter-thrusts than upon the solution of the great problem which overshadows Western civilisation as a whole. This problem is whether the affairs of nations shall be dealt with by the war-method or the peace-method. Two great States have espoused the war-method, either actually or potentially, as an instrument of national policy. Both these States are "totalitarian," dictatorial, and contemptuous of democratic freedom. Both are in so precarious a financial position—to say nothing of their other economic difficulties—that they may have to choose between internal breakdown and foreign adventure.

Central Europe may, if no overriding consideration intervenes, become the theatre either of their co-operation or of their rivalry. All the present Central European stresses are affected by these possibilities.

But, during the past few months, they have been affected also by what may prove to be an overriding consideration. This is British rearmament. Signor Mussolini is alleged to have informed the leader of the Italian Veterans' Organization—who, fresh from a visit to Berlin, expressed anxiety about the persistent rumours of impending war—that, while he understood the veterans' anxiety, Italy could not afford to wait until British rearmament should be completed. The setback to Mussolini's hopes of capturing Madrid by a swift march of his "volunteer" Fascist legion has, indeed, caused him acute embarrassment. Those who think they understand his thoughts believe that he is weighing the advantages and drawbacks of large-scale military intervention in Spain against those of cutting his Spanish losses and seeking compensation in a policy of co-operation with Central European States in the Danubian region.

Herr Hitler is worried too. His military advisers do not like the Spanish adventure. Still less do they like the idea of a European war before they are quite ready for it. But Herr Hitler may not be able to base his policy solely upon military considerations. His whole Nazi system may be at stake. The Pope has condemned it. Like Mussolini, he may think it imprudent to wait until British rearmament is completed.

Meanwhile there is something which could weight the Central European balance on the side of peace. This would be a British policy firm and clear, a policy so frankly proclaimed that none could ignore it, of union and co-operation with all the freedom-loving forces of Europe against the war-method of dealing with international affairs. Some such policy has been repeatedly adumbrated by His Majesty's Ministers. Adumbration is not enough. The present stresses in Central Europe can only be stabilised by knowledge that British rearmament will support a determined policy of peace. Such a policy would make the future of Europe safe "beyond a peradventure."

ATLANTIC AIRWAY

BY LORD SEMPILL

DURING the past few months discussion in regard to civil aviation has revolved round the remarkably detailed plans made in both this country and the United States of America for the inauguration of a North Atlantic airway. Successful experimental flights have been carried out over here by two of the specially adapted Empire-spanning flying-boats, and it is expected that the first North Atlantic crossing will be made in either May or June.

One result of these activities has been a crop of prophecies. It has been said that mail services will be in regular operation this year and that passengers will be carried in the immediate future. The only aeroplane or flying-boat crossings of the North Atlantic have been made by specially adapted machines so overloaded that, in many instances, even wireless equipment has had to be omitted in order that the necessary fuel might be carried. So far, commercial flights on this route have been confined to the airship, which has established a very remarkable record of reliability.

The solution of so big a problem as is involved in the regular air crossing of the North Atlantic obviously could not be left to haphazard methods, nor could it reasonably be made the sole concern of only one of the national enterprises interested. If development was to proceed without wasteful competition and the dissipation of effort, the various countries concerned had to collaborate; a common pool of knowledge had to be created in order that progress might be as rapid as possible and the financial burden had to be distributed.

With regard to that part of the Empire chiefly involved—Great Britain, Canada, and the Irish Free State—it was decided to form a joint operating company to take over control when the initial experimental work had been completed. In this company

a nominee of the British Government is to hold 51 per cent. of the capital, and nominees of the Canadian and Irish Free State Governments are to have 24½ per cent. each. The British nominee, Imperial Airways, is to appoint three of the nine directors, including the Chairman and Managing Director. A mission was sent to the United States, and agreement was reached as regards reciprocal landing rights; close collaboration with Pan-American Airways had already been established.

In furtherance of this scheme, the U.S. Government is considering the payment of a large subsidy for the mail service, and, though the actual recipient has yet to be named, it is fully expected that this will be Pan-American Airways. There has been criticism in regard to the apparent Anglo-American monopoly created; and it is most strongly urged that no plan adopted should involve the exclusion of other countries from using all normal facilities. Reasonable co-operation should be accorded to air transport operators of proved efficiency in other countries desirous of utilising the facilities of the proposed route.

So much, then, for the purely financial background, from which it is seen that the four Governments most intimately concerned are giving the scheme their support. The next and vital problem that had to be faced was the selection and preparation of suitable termini and coast bases.

Up till very recently, this country had made comparatively little use of the flying boat (which not unnaturally would be favoured for transatlantic heavier-than-air operation), and no suitable base existed in Great Britain. With the introduction of flying-boats on all the Empire airways, a marine airport had to be found, and the first choice fell on Southampton Water, to which terminal all the Empire departures and arrivals have been transferred from Croydon. From the first, this base has been regarded as temporary, since it is by no means ideal, and of various schemes put forward for a permanent terminal, the preference was for Portsmouth. After considerable delay, during which it seemed as though the scheme might fall through, the Portsmouth Council has now decided, with considerable official support, to proceed with plans for building a barrage at Langstone Harbour; this will become the permanent marine airport of Great Britain when it is completed.

In Ireland, the estuary of the Shannon has been decided upon as the base from which direct transatlantic flights will be operated. The proposed airport will be at Foynes, while a radio station has been erected at Rynanna as well. The recent flights of the flying boat *Cambria* were made to test the working of the radio service at these bases.

Newfoundland provides the station on the far side of the Atlantic. Work has been going forward on the construction of a high-power radio station at Botwood, the marine airport site, and two smaller ones have been erected at Hattie's Camp, the land airport, and on the shore of Gander Lake, where a feeder base will be in operation.

All these bases are concerned with the direct crossing of the North Atlantic, but it is obvious that attention must be given to the southern route *via* the Azores, where, as will be seen, better conditions are encountered. Here the crossing lies between Bermuda and the Azores. Pan-American Airways have been co-operating with Imperial Airways in the development of the Bermuda base, and a British flying-boat, the *Cavalier*, is already making experimental flights from it. Facilities already exist at the Azores.

And, finally among the preliminaries, the question of suitable aircraft had to be considered. From the first, the British authorities realized that the designing of a machine comparable in carrying power and comfort for passengers to those in use on the other Empire airways which had an adequate range for the North Atlantic crossing would take time. What was needed was an aircraft of long endurance and sufficiently high performance to overcome the natural difficulties of the route. For experimental purposes, therefore, it was decided to adapt two of the Empire boats designed for the African, Indian and Australian services. These two machines, which have no passenger accommodation, have been flying with great success, the *Caledonia* having made two excellent long-distance non-stop flights, one each way between Southampton and Alexandria. Her sister ship, the *Cambria*, has flown non-stop round the British Isles and is undertaking a series of cruises off the west coast of Ireland.

[These are the first strings, but two other interesting types are

in course of development. One is the Short-Mayo composite aircraft, the other the D.H. *Albatross*. The former idea, conceived by Major Mayo with a view to overcoming the difficulty of taking off with a heavily loaded sea-going machine, consists of two aircraft, one of which, a long-range, high-speed float seaplane, is carried for launching purposes only on the back of the other, a flying-boat. By this means one of the problems of getting heavily-loaded long-distance float seaplanes into the air may be solved. The de Havilland *Albatross*, now awaiting test flights, is an aeroplane with sufficient range to fly the North Atlantic; the question whether for the moment anything but marine aircraft should be employed for this route is, however, a most controversial one.

Whilst there can be no doubt that flying-boats may serve a very useful purpose for Empire Air transport generally, it does not follow that they will of necessity prove to be the most suitable form of aircraft for the North Atlantic crossing. There is undoubtedly a very reasonable argument in favour of the multi-engined land machine of high performance. Thanks to advance in design of aircraft, engines and equipment, which are becoming increasingly efficient and reliable, the possibility of forced landings may be discounted. On the direct North Atlantic route the flying-boat may be at a distinct disadvantage, owing to the prevalence at some periods of the year of ice masses in the vicinity of Newfoundland.

One may anticipate therefore a future for the land machine, probably flying at a high altitude between the troposphere and the stratosphere where good flying conditions may usually be expected. When flying eastward a high following wind may be taken advantage of. The western passage may be handicapped for this reason, but although the flying time involved on the crossing would be longer, it would in a measure be compensated for by the normal change of time *en route*. The future North Atlantic air service may therefore be operated by land machines flying in or near the stratosphere and by flying-boats flying at lower altitudes. There has been a good deal of conjecture as to actual route which will be adopted: whether the Azores or the direct passage between Ireland and Newfoundland. Experience only can prove which is the most practical, but in view of the

considerably greater distance involved in the more southerly route there will naturally be a tendency to concentrate on developing the direct service. Land machine operation on the Azores route will be difficult, because it is almost impracticable to provide a really good land aerodrome at the Azores.

The work so far, then, has been entirely preparatory. But it has been as thorough as foresight and experience can make it. Graver questions arise, however, when the problems of the actual flights are faced, and until such preliminary flying has been completed, no one can predict the outcome.

Three routes are open to heavier-than-air craft flying from Europe to America. The one to which most publicity has been given is the direct crossing between Ireland and Newfoundland, but alternative ways lie *via* the Azores and *via* the Arctic Circle. Actually, the last-named is theoretically the best ; it involves no over-sea flights of more than seven hundred miles, and in this respect has a great advantage over the other two. It is, however, considered impracticable at the present time. Ground organization is practically non-existent, and much has still to be learnt of the meteorology of this area. Surveys have been carried out by the British Arctic Air Route Expedition, Commander Wolfgang von Gronau, Squadron-Leader Lawrence, Mr. John Grierson, Colonel Lindbergh on behalf of Pan-American Airways, and others. Many believe that this is the route of the future, and that, if the necessary ground organization were established, no greater difficulties than those experienced on the European airways would be encountered, at any rate for six months in the year. "There is no reason," writes Mr. John Grierson, after pointing out the need for radio stations, and the like, "why the Arctic air route should not be operated in the very near future, first as a six-month service, and later perennially. It would constitute the vital link in communications between the Old World and the New . . . with greater comfort and safety than could be offered by any other heavier-than-air transatlantic service."

It is with the other two routes, however, that present projects are concerned ; each offers certain advantages and disadvantages. Thus, the direct North Atlantic crossing is the shorter, the distance between Rynanna and Port Botwood being some

1,900 miles, while from the Azores to Bermuda the distance is 2,100 miles. On the other hand, weather conditions favour the more southerly crossing. In the North Atlantic, the prevailing winds are westerly and attain velocities of upwards of 40 m.p.h. ; this is a distinct handicap to crossings in a westward direction, while fogs are common on certain sections, notably round Newfoundland.

On the Bermuda-Azores route, the winds are variable between north-easterly and westerly, and they are lighter than those found between Ireland and Newfoundland ; altogether the conditions are more settled. It seems not unlikely, then, that, while British interests will tend to favour the direct North Atlantic route, natural conditions may make it necessary at first to adopt this principally for eastward crossings, the westward ones being flown on the southerly course. Only practical experience can decide this point.

Weather and accurate forecasts thereof provides the main difficulty of Atlantic flying. On land routes, such as those across Europe, Africa, and India, permanent observation stations can be set up with comparatively little trouble, but obviously this cannot be done on the Atlantic. Furthermore, ships' reports are only of limited value for aeronautical purposes, for which the determination of conditions at heights of 5,000 feet or more are necessary. The normal method of discovering wind velocity at height is to release pilot balloons and to observe their drift instrumentally. Over the North Atlantic, this is frequently impossible on account of low cloud. Nevertheless, a joint survey by the British, Canadian, and Newfoundland Governments was started some ten years ago in connection with the then existing airship programme, and it has brought to light a great deal of informative data. This problem is one to which first attention will have to be given during the forthcoming experimental flights, and it is eminently desirable that all Governments concerned in the Atlantic air crossing should encourage their shipping, by subsidy if necessary, to provide facilities for the making of regional weather reports for aviation purposes.

The last of the major problems is the commercial one. It has been demonstrated that aircraft crossings of the Atlantic are possible ; the *Caledonia* has shown that the two special

flying-boats have under average conditions the necessary range. What useful load can be carried? In their adapted form these two boats have available for useful load, in addition to crew, a capacity of some 1,000 lb. This would not admit of a passenger-carrying service on a commercial basis, though it might be of value for urgent mail. At the same time, it is not claimed that these machines are anything more than experimental, and progress will be determined by the lessons learnt from them. One line of development lies in far larger boats. Thus, Mr. Gouge, of Messrs. Short Bros., the designer of the Empire flying-boats, has visualized machines of more than 70 tons weight, as compared with the 20 tons of the existing type, and has stated that the production of a boat twice as large as the present types is an immediate practical proposition. Sikorsky, the eminent Russian-American designer of large flying-boats, predicts that 45-ton boats will be in use in the next five years, and similar possibilities are visualized by Dornier in Germany and Martin in America.

A great deal may be achieved by developing launching arrangements already mentioned in connection with the Short-Mayo type. It is stated that the Short-Mayo aircraft, though designed for the same useful load as the *Caledonia* Atlantic class—i.e., 1,000 lb.—may actually carry 4,000 lb. in certain favourable circumstances. The value of the method is thus apparent. The catapulting of machines, as employed in the Fleet Air Arm for launching machines from ship decks, and so successfully carried out by the Germans in the regular operation of the South Atlantic air route, is another means by which the take-off difficulty may be overcome.

The great problem, therefore, from the commercial angle is the possibility of flying the ocean with an adequate payload. A great deal could be done to attain this end by the development of a really efficient device for assisted launching. By this means a machine even of present-day design might be operated with a load so much greater than it could normally carry when restricted to taking the air in the ordinary way, that it might immediately become a commercial proposition.

Though many subsidiary problems must be faced and solved before practical Atlantic flying on a commercial basis can become

normal, the points reviewed are the main ones ; and they are serious enough. What, then, are the prospects ? How much is to be expected, and how soon ?

The first conclusion is that all-the-year-round flying on any one route seems impracticable with existing equipment, or even with what may be available in the next few years. During the spring and summer, the direct North Atlantic route from west to east and probably in the reverse direction will be possible, with a small load of mails. From these beginnings passenger services will be developed in due course.

In bad weather conditions, the Azores route may be favoured. Though the over-sea flight is longer, the better weather conditions to some extent offset this disadvantage. Thus, it seems not unlikely (though no definite statement can yet be made) that the normal course in the preliminary stages will be for east-bound machines to fly direct from Newfoundland to Ireland, and those westward-bound *via* Azores and Bermuda.

Flying cannot be a really commercial possibility unless it is carried out with regularity. The uncertainties of weather, and the difficulties of establishing meteorological services, so that these uncertainties can be overcome, must inevitably tend to postpone the realization of the reliability to which we have become accustomed on the Eastern and African Empire airways. The American subsidy arrangements provide for the commencement of mail services in November ; but it must be understood that this is no more than a provision. It is futile to attempt exact prophecy when practical problems have not, as yet, been investigated.

Nor must too much be expected as the result of the *Caledonia's* Egyptian flights. True, these reveal adequate range, but the conditions are very dissimilar. The route between Southampton and Alexandria is well known ; fairly good meteorological services exist ; and weather conditions throughout the route were fully known.

The accident to the ill-fated Imperial Airways machine *Capricornus* which crashed in the vicinity of Mâcon on the River Saône is particularly unfortunate at this juncture, occurring as it does when we have such high hopes for the new Empire Flying-boats.

It might be thought that this calamity exemplifies the mistake

of including overland stretches on flying-boat routes, but after all there was an alighting place on the River Saône at Mâcon, and engines are now so reliable that there is little danger on such a route of forced landings due to engine failure.

The lesson to be drawn is rather the need for better and more thorough ground organization, particularly in relation to radio facilities. Admittedly the route at this point is rather a difficult one in conditions of poor visibility, but it is reasonable to suppose that had radio communications been of a higher standard the pilot would have found his way to the appointed landing place.

The Atlantic machines, however, will have to face sudden storms and other unfavourable conditions, of which in present circumstances no warning can be given. Experience may show that this danger is less than is at present supposed, but every possible arrangement should be made to provide meteorological information.

So far as passenger services are concerned, the airship has no immediate rival ; it will remain, for some years at least, the only practical means of conveying large loads between Europe and America. Its speed may be low as compared with heavier-than-air craft, but it provides a degree of comfort that even flying-boats twice the size of the Empire class could not attain, and it has the immense advantage of being able, owing to its greater range, of avoiding storm areas by flying round them. The work of Dr. Eckener and his colleagues during the past thirty-seven years represents one of the greatest achievements in the development of aviation, and the success of lighter-than-air craft owes more to their persistent endeavour than to any other set of circumstances. It is owing to the example thus set that America, in spite of her interest in the flying-boat, is actively considering commercial airship projects, as also is Holland.

Great Britain abandoned her airship programme after the disaster to R.101, and although for the immediate future we have put our faith in the flying-boat, a type of aircraft capable of very great development, we cannot afford for ever to neglect the airship, which in the opinion of many in this country has a very definite future. One thing is certain : the need for an air-link between this country and Canada and the United States is paramount ; and the business community would be prepared

to give enthusiastic support to an air mail. "In my opinion," the Assistant Postmaster-General of the United States has said, "there is nothing in the world from the mail-carrying standpoint that has better potentialities for heavy business than the Atlantic air service." For mails, speed is essential and great load-carrying capacity is not such a vital factor. Here, heavier-than-air craft are the obvious choice.

To visualize all-the-year-round passenger services in the next year or two by North Atlantic flying-boats is, then, out of the question. Mail services there may very well be, even though on an irregular basis. The problems of the Atlantic crossing are immense, and to theorize on them is pointless. What is important from every standpoint is that a practical start is being made. Too often, British aviation—as with airships—has started a job and left it unfinished. We have now a considered policy in regard to the North Atlantic airway. We are spending time and money in making sure that the necessary experiments shall start under the most favourable conditions. That is something with which we may feel satisfied.

The North Atlantic will be flown; step by step, regular services will be built up. When it will finally be conquered no man can say; but we can be certain that the determined attack now being made on what is probably the greatest problem in long-distance commercial flying will eventually bring in the fruits of success. There is one aspect that should not be forgotten, and that is that the development of world aviation is not merely a national question. It is incumbent on those nations which are favoured by geographical circumstances to take a wide outlook and not to seek to preserve a monopoly of any particular route because they are thus placed. The success of air transport today is not due to the capacity of any one nation, but to the constant endeavour of all, and the co-operation which has helped so much in other parts of the world should be encouraged on the North Atlantic route. Where a parochial attitude on the part of the English-speaking nations might retard the successful outcome of the efforts to join Europe with America by air, a concerted endeavour would result in hastening, in the interests of all nations, this tremendous achievement.

THE PROBLEM OF NEWFOUNDLAND

BY THOMAS LODGE

FOR three full years the oldest colony in the British Empire has been governed by a commission which, subject to a somewhat shadowy general supervision exercisable by the Secretary of State for the Dominions, combines theoretically complete executive and legislative authority within the island. In appearance it is the complete negation of political freedom because, though three of the Commissioners must be Newfoundlanders, these appointments are made by the Secretary of State on his unfettered responsibility, and no means exist by which the views of the people on any given appointment can be ascertained.

The offence against the fundamental principles of democracy is, however, much more apparent than real—if the measure of democracy is the effective influence which the ordinary citizen is able to exercise on his government. The Newfoundlander has renounced temporarily his right to choose, every four years at least, between two parties equally lacking in political principles. He has not given up his right of direct access to the highest executive authority in the various government departments whose activities affect his daily life. The scale of life in the island is such that direct contact between the governed and the individual members of the ruling body, far from imposing an intolerable burden on the latter, is in reality of very great advantage. There is probably no community in the world in which the influence of the citizen on his Government is so direct, immediate, and potent, as it is in St. John's.

The real danger to be feared from a continuance of Commission Government is not the creation of a body of tyrants riding roughshod over the wishes of the people. It is rather the emergence of a community, free to criticize, with little or no sense of ultimate responsibility for the results of their criticism, safe in the con-

sciousness that the mother country has, for good or ill, taken over the consequences of the past mistakes under responsible government and of the present shortcomings of Commission Government.

The causes which ended in the suspension of parliamentary government in the island are ably described in the report of the Royal Commission over which Lord Amulree presided. The only valid criticism which might be made of that report is that it embodies the finding of the judge on the evidence laid before him rather than the considered opinion of the expert investigator. It emphasizes the unsavoury features in a squalid political story. It fails to appreciate the economic revolution which was in fact happening in Newfoundland while post-war deflation was working itself out; and it fails to realize that the contribution of the political misdeeds of successive governments to the difficulties in which Newfoundland found herself in 1933 was less important than the inability of all those governments to appreciate the fact that a revolution was taking place and that the fishing industry was ceasing, and inevitably ceasing, to be the economic mainstay of the country.

Fishing as prosecuted in Newfoundland is essentially a capitalistic operation of a highly speculative character. It involves the production of an article months in advance of its consumption, in circumstances in which it is physically impossible to predict either the total quantity which will be produced over any given period or the unit cost of production.

If dried codfish were a commodity like tin, susceptible of precise analysis and constant in quality, or even if, as in the case of rubber, demand and supply could be predicted with some accuracy, difficulties in marketing would be at any rate mitigated by the existence of a market in futures. As it is, the fisherman produces an article the value of which to him is not, and cannot be, known at the time of production.

Essentially the fisherman is a tiny capitalist taking all the ordinary capital risks. Unfortunately in Newfoundland in the vast majority of cases he is a capitalist working on borrowed capital, with no reserves behind him which would enable him to choose the moment for the marketing of his product. He must, if he can, sell it at the earliest possible moment and precisely at the

time when every one of his thousands of fellows is in exactly the same situation.

There is only one section of the Newfoundland fishing industry in which the whole of the capital risk is not normally borne by the ordinary fisherman, and that is "banking." Here the main capital risk is beyond the resources of the individual, and the risk he takes is that inherent in any fishing venture—the finding of fish in sufficient quantities at the right spot. In "banking" the ordinary fisherman has at any rate a reasonable chance of seeing some cash return for his toil.

Two-thirds of the Newfoundland catch of cod, however, is secured by the shore fishery; and here the normal practice is for the fisherman in the spring to go to his local merchant and get advanced his quite modest requirements in the way of food, twine, salt, and petrol. He then goes in a motor-boat to search for fish in the immediate vicinity of his settlement. He brings his catch back and has it "made," i.e., dried in the sun, by his family, or turns it over to the local merchant to have it made. Ultimately he will be credited with the proceeds against the cost of his supplies. If he is lucky he will have a surplus. If he is unlucky he will have a deficit and he will be in debt to his merchant.

In the nature of things he can have no influence over the price secured for his product. Local consumption is negligible. For all practical purposes consumption takes place thousands of miles away, and the price is determined by the play between the demand of a Latin consumer and the supply of a commodity, the production of which is shared by Norway, Iceland, and other fishing countries.

When it comes to fixing this price, the exporter, who is mainly but not entirely a St. John's merchant, begins to play his part. He cannot be expected to be a quixotic philanthropist, and the making of a profit is essential to the carrying on of his business. Subject to some limitations he is in the position of being able to make profit a first charge on the proceeds of sale, taking precedence of even a bare living for the primary producer. There are, of course, some qualifications to this theoretical freedom from the ordinary risks of commercial capitalistic operations. The local merchant takes the risk of supplying the

local fisherman. If the fisherman ends the season in debt, the merchant may treat this debt as an asset in his balance-sheet, but, sooner or later, he must recognize the hard fact that if his debtor has nothing he cannot pay. The St. John's merchant supplies the local merchant on credit terms or may himself take a direct supply risk. If in the long run the local merchant is faced with a mass of irrecoverable debts, this fact will be reflected in bankruptcy or in compromise with the St. John's merchant.

The net result on the community is obvious to the most superficial observer. The merchant class in St. John's lead comfortable lives, and the returns from estate duties show that they manage to transmit competencies from one generation to another. The local merchant leads a tolerable life, but a considerable proportion sooner or later go to the wall. The fishing class as a whole live on a standard for which it would be difficult to find a parallel in any part of the white world.

However repugnant the notion that profit should be a first charge may be to modern minds, it is unfair and unreasonable to blame the individual merchant, either of St. John's or of the outports. Each of his separate acts is legitimate, normal, and often kindly. If he could not see at any rate the hope of a profit he would not be operating. If any individual merchant refrains from acting, his inaction does not benefit the primary producer. Indeed, to the extent to which it lessens competition among buyers, inaction operates in the other direction. The only criticism which it is fair to make is of the class as a whole: they have failed to throw up leaders who could appreciate the fundamental that codfishing, as carried on in Newfoundland since medieval times, has ceased to be an adequate basis for the economic life of the island.

That it has so ceased is demonstrable, and that the fact is not recognized is evidence of a certain obstinate die-hardness among the local ruling classes. The total gross value of all fish products, at the point when they leave Newfoundland, is of the order of £1½ million. This is the gross value, and to arrive at an estimate of what the fisherman himself receives one has to deduct the cost of salt required for making, of the petrol needed for the fisherman's locomotion, of the internal transport from the point of production to the point of export, of the maintenance

of the capital fabric in the form of boats, harbours, nets, etc., and also, of course, the exporter's profit.

The fishermen number 34,000. In years like 1935 and 1936 it is unlikely that the average fishermen secured as much as £20 as a return for his season's work. In other words, all he got was his bare maintenance during the few months in which he can work. For the rest of the time he was either carried by his local merchant, or in a relatively few cases he got some employment in the woods; in the vast majority of cases he went on Government relief.

It may be that some increase in this return of £1½ million may result from better methods of production or improvements in marketing arrangements. But no unprejudiced person who looks at the cold facts can hope that any changes inside the fishing industry are going to give 34,000 fishermen a tolerable living. Therefore any Government which wishes to plan for more than a year or two—and the fundamental justification for a Commission form of Government is that it ought to be able to plan for a generation—must look for a policy which in the end will take fishermen away from fishing.

The problem of Newfoundland may be difficult of solution; it is at least simple in presentation. For centuries the inhabitants have regarded fishing as the be-all and end-all of their economic life. Outside capital came in and developed the iron-ore mines on Bell Island, the two paper mills at Grand Falls and Corner Brook and the lead-zinc mine at Buchans. These four industries have created oases of prosperity in a desert of poverty, where the workers are, relatively and absolutely, well paid and lead lives which compare with those led in any other industrial countries. They are controlled by interests which, while anxious enough to contribute their share to the general well-being of the island, would disclaim the right as well as the desire to exercise any direct political influence on its government.

The rest of the Island is dominated by this medieval business of catching and curing codfish, supplemented by a little cultivation of the land in a rather haphazard manner. For practical purposes there are no alternative employments open to the fishermen. One-third of the timber resources of the island is still inadequately exploited or not exploited at all. It may well

be that recent developments in the world pulp situation may render possible in a not-too-distant future the working of an additional industrial plant. Troubles in Southern Europe and armament demands may well increase the demand on the iron ore of Bell Island and restore prosperity to that community. The rise in the level of base metal prices may once more make possible the development of the copper deposits which are known to exist. No one, however, who reflects on the elaborate processes which have to be gone through before large-scale mining operations are feasible in any part of the world dare be optimistic about the prospect of mining developments in themselves providing the solution for the employment problem. Industrial expansion may give some outlet for the increasing population of the paper towns. Mining may give some marginal relief. Neither, however, will touch the problem of the fisherman any more than the obvious prosperity of our own home counties is solving the difficulties of our own special areas.

The fisherman will not become a miner or a papermaker, but there is no reason why, under adequate guidance, he should not extract a better living from the land than he can ever hope to get from the sea. If he has had cultivable land he, or his family, will have cultivated it for generations. He may have regarded it as a subsidiary occupation, and it certainly never gave him the lavish return which the fortune of fishing might give. Up to the War, however, it probably counted for far more in his internal economy than either he or his political leaders ever appreciated.

That land settlement will ever prove the panacea for the industrial problem in a highly organized community such as our own is a proposition on which a degree of scepticism is permissible. Successful cultivation of small holdings goes ill with trade union regulations and limited hours of work ; and no one will expect or even wish that the trade unions should risk what they have struggled to gain over generations in order to make land settlement schemes work successfully. This difficulty is absent in Newfoundland. There the fundamental problem is whether the clearing and cultivation of land can be made a sound economic proposition. No one would argue that Newfoundland is an ideal country in which to farm. Its climate is a great deal

better than its reputation in Europe, but the growing season is too short for the ripening of wheat, and there is hardly a month of the year in which a frost is impossible. But it demonstrably can and does produce all the ordinary vegetables, with a yield basis comparable to anything in England, and all the fodder required to carry sheep and cattle. In fact, the most independent sections of the island, outside the industrial centres, are to be found in the agricultural communities of the west coast.

A country whose timber gives to its people the means of shelter and warmth, which can produce vegetables and carry livestock, must have the possibilities of being self-supporting, provided always that its human element is capable of the necessary effort. That this last condition can be fulfilled is demonstrated by the success which has attended a remarkable experiment in land settlement carried out by a group of citizens of St. John's.

In the spring of 1934 they selected ten individuals in the capital who had been unemployed for lengthy periods and who saw no hope of regaining economic independence. In so far as they were men with a very definite desire to get out of the rut of dependence they must be assumed to have been above the average of dole recipients, but they were in no sense picked men. No one who saw the rather pathetic group set out at the end of April would have been surprised if at least half had not given up in despair after a few weeks of irksome and unaccustomed toil. The adaptability and the energy under adequate leadership of the Newfoundlander came out remarkably. By the summer it was clear that the question of the moral recovery of men of this class presented no insurmountable difficulty. Temperamental failures there might be, but the percentage of these could not—on the realized facts—be high enough to endanger the success of either the particular experiment itself or of a considerable extension thereof.

No one, of course, is going to maintain that in a few months these city unemployed were transformed into skilled agricultural workers or that the sour land which was cleared for the first time in history gave immediate bounteous crops. What was apparent in 1934 to anyone with vision was that so long as men could be relied upon, under the stimulus of hope or the sense of property or even merely the desire for a better standard of

life, to do a good day's work, the problem of enabling them to extract a living from the soil must be capable of solution. Any casual visitor in 1936 could see with his own eyes that the land cleared in the first year was producing adequate crops.

Under the pressure of the Government the Trustees of Markland, as the first settlement was called, extended the scale of their experiment further and faster than their own individual judgments would have dictated.

This extension, with its consequent strain on the administrative machine, added enormously to the difficulties of the Trustees because they never had before them a limited problem. But to the Commission of Government, or at any rate to the English Commissioners, the problem of finding an approach to the solution of the general problem seemed so urgent, and the time-factor so important, that some risk had to be taken in the transformation of what might have been simply an interesting philanthropic effort into the foundation for a national policy.

The experiment has been in being too short a period for definite answers to be provided to the fundamental questions such as the number of acres required for a self-supporting family, the precise cost of clearing land and the relative advantages of draining marshland or clearing mineral land, or the period which will elapse before independence is achieved; but enough is known for it to be certain that the total cost of rehabilitation will be far smaller than that of any corresponding scheme in England. Given the fundamental psychological factors, this must be the case. A cottage to satisfy local regulations cannot be built in England for less than about £400; the Newfoundlander's needs are satisfied by a frame house costing less than £100. The Newfoundlander is content with a general standard of living which would be quite unacceptable to the English family.

Markland, moreover, is something far more than a land settlement scheme. It recognizes that the problem of Newfoundland is as much, perhaps more, a moral than a material one, and that the real hope is in training the next generation. The Trustees therefore made education the foundation of the project and the school the centre of the settlement. They took what was best in the experience of Scandinavian folk school systems and they adapted it to Newfoundland conditions. While safeguarding

the rights of parents to have the religious teaching of their children in the proper hands, they went far in mitigating the dreary denominationalism which blights the general system of education in the island. In the education sphere their success was immediate and spectacular, as any visitor who saw the children at work or play would testify.

Indeed, no non-Newfoundlander visited Markland and failed to come away enthusiastic. Unfortunately it must be admitted that the opinion of the merchant class of St. John's was on the whole hostile. It is not easy to give a very satisfactory explanation for this hostility. The Newfoundlander wanted immediate results when in the nature of things the transformation of dole recipients into independent citizens must take years. He criticized gross expenditure without setting against this expenditure the material as well as the moral assets realized. At bottom, however, his opposition was probably the instinctive opposition to a movement which, if successful, would undermine his domination of the fisherman class.

He had no criticism to offer of parallel experiments tending to improve the conditions of existing fishing settlements and to stimulate land cultivation as a subsidiary occupation, because these still kept the fisherman at his fishing. Desirable as such experiments may be in selected districts, they cannot, however, in themselves provide the general solution, which must aim at a substantial reduction in the total number employed in fishing. Such a reduction is essential not merely because the total yield will be shared by a smaller number but also, and mainly, because that smaller number will be in a much stronger position in relation to the merchant class. That the merchant class will see their own position weakened without a struggle is unlikely. It is, however, at once the duty and the opportunity of the Commission of Government to justify their existence by the consistent pursuit of a sound policy even if it is not pleasing to the only vocal class in the country.

BROADCASTING IN INDIA

BY IQBAL SINGH

“**S**ECRET ” India is likely to become still more secret in the future. Occult marvels, for instance, are being gradually eliminated by the inventions of modern Science ; a public which has become familiar with the possibilities of aviation cannot be expected to show any very great interest in levitation. And radio, which came to India several years ago, like so many other vehicles of Western civilization, has come to stay. The attractions it offers may well render certain well-known yogic practices superfluous.

Broadcasting in India has not yet fully emerged from its embryonic phase, but the process of growth can already be seen to fall into two distinct stages. It has a pre-history and a history. The pre-history is over ; the history is now being made. To the former belong the Radio Clubs of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Rangoon, and Karachi. These were the pioneers of broadcasting in India during the early years of its development. With only a nominal assistance from the Government, they maintained a service of limited, but lively character. It is true, their service was chiefly intended to relieve the after-dinner boredom of gymkhana life with brief interludes of etheric music. Nevertheless, they played an important part in familiarizing India with the reality of broadcasting. In 1927 their place was taken by the Indian Broadcasting Company which obtained a licence from the Government to organize a broadcasting service on lines more or less similar to those of the B.B.C.

The company started with every sign of initiative and promise. It set up stations at Bombay and Calcutta, each having an aerial capacity of three kilowatts. Its broadcasting centre at Bombay was inaugurated by no less a person than Lord Irwin (now Lord Halifax) himself. For the first time in history, the voice of Vice-regal blessings was wafted across the vast expanses of India,

and was heard simultaneously in places as far apart as the cool heights of Simla and the steaming Coast of Coromandel. This was an historic event, and it naturally raised fervent hopes among the radio enthusiasts in India. Subsequent events, however, proved their optimism to have been somewhat premature. The Company was not conspicuously successful in achieving the purpose for which it had been brought into being. That was not because there was any want of devotion and earnestness among those concerned in the experiment. On the contrary, the energy and effort which they put into the task of establishing the service on a satisfactory, self-supporting basis was positively heroic. But to run even a strictly limited broadcasting service for India is a colossal undertaking. To achieve even a mediocre measure of success, the Company needed very large financial reserves—or, alternatively, a substantial and regular subsidy from the Government. Both these conditions were lacking in the case of the Indian Broadcasting Company. Its transmissions hardly marked any improvement on those of its precursors. There were still the same short and rudimentary programmes of European and Indian music as in the days of the Radio Clubs. There was the additional attraction of competent weather and Stock Exchange reports. Unfortunately the new features failed to capture the public imagination. In India, unlike England, the weather is not news, and the ebb and flow of capital has little direct interest except for a microscopic minority. The Government eventually (1930) gave the Company the *coup de grâce* by terminating the arrangement. Thus the first attempt to give India a broadcasting service on a national scale ended in a rather ignominious failure—a failure which was implicit in the situation.

Broadcasting in India thenceforth became a Government concern. The Indian State Broadcasting Service was inaugurated under the auspices of the Government of India's Department of Industries and Commerce. To keep the service abreast of public opinion a Central Broadcasting Advisory Committee was set up. Both official and non-official elements were represented on the Committee. These gentlemen of good will met periodically to think out ways and means of introducing more liveliness into the air. But the central problem seems to have

eluded them. No attempt was ever made to survey the technical issues involved in creating an adequate broadcasting system for a vast sub-continent like India. Indeed, in some ways the new dispensation was even more of a dilettante affair than the old. Again, it was not the fault of those engaged in the enterprise. The failure to extend or crystallize the service was due to circumstances over which even the Advisory Committee could exercise little control. For the country was at the time in the throes of political and economic crises. Government was pre-occupied, on the one hand, with the onerous duty of maintaining Law and Order ; on the other hand, it had to exercise constant vigilance to save the Rupee Ratio from falling into the abyss opening before it.

So, first things were tackled first. Those who were longing for etheric entertainment must wait. They had to wait for over five years. This was an eventful period in the history of world broadcasting. Great strides were being made in the development of this medium in the Far West as well as the Near East. In England, the British Broadcasting Corporation had shifted its headquarters from Savoy Hill to Portland Place. And although Mr. Eric Gill's innocent Ariel shocked the susceptibilities of certain thurifers of morality, their protests were unable to interrupt Prospero's revels, which were only just beginning rather than ending. All those years Bombay remained comparatively quiet. Only once—in December, 1933—did it bestir itself to make the world aware of its existence as a broadcasting entity. After this mid-winter outburst of energy, Bombay lapsed back into its normal tranquillity.

Yet the Nirvanic repose was not altogether of Bombay's own choosing. There was indecision in high places. Delhi had some doubts as to whether broadcasting was an instrument of angelic or the other powers. It was not until 1935 that these doubts were finally resolved. The times, too, were now less ominous. The political horizon was more peaceful than at any time since the appointment of the Simon Commission ; the clouds of depression had lifted sufficiently to reveal the proverbial silver lining ; and neither Law and Order, nor the Rupee Ratio, were any longer in danger. Further, the revenue from Customs duties on imports of radio equipment had shown a remarkable

and continuous upward trend during the previous two years. It is not inconceivable that there had been also some helpful hints from the radio manufacturing industry of Great Britain. All these factors were favourable to the expansion of broadcasting in India.

With the passing of indecision from the official mind, the prehistoric phase of Indian broadcasting came to an end. And history began. The first concrete manifestation of the new policy was the Government's decision to open a high-power medium-wave broadcasting station at Delhi, using a twenty-kilowatts transmitter. The next step was to find a man with sufficient practical ability and vision to supervise the task of reorganizing Indian broadcasting service. The Government was able to secure the services of Mr. Lionel Fielden from the B.B.C. for this purpose. A happier choice could hardly have been made. His extensive study of the Continental broadcasting systems, including the Russian, gave him an ideal background of practical experience from which to approach the intricate problems of broadcasting in India. He reached Bombay early in September, 1935, and set to work immediately. There was a great deal of work awaiting him. There were the finishing touches to be put to the new station at Delhi, which was formally brought into operation on New Year's day. But much more important than the inaugural ceremonies were the technical questions to be faced. These had not received any serious attention. Even the crucial problem of defining the boundaries of various links in the projected scheme had not been properly investigated. Bombay and Calcutta had hitherto enjoyed a free and unlimited run on the ether. This had naturally inclined the broadcasting authorities towards a policy of *laissez faire*. Mr. Fielden, however, was quick to perceive that uncircumscribed horizons were a thing of the past rather than the future, and that the territorial question must be settled.

All these matters called for expert advice, and expert advice was obtained. Once again the B.B.C. came to the aid of Indian broadcasting by lending the services of their Chief Technical Advisor, Mr. H. L. Kirke. Mr. Kirke's investigations, and the recommendations arising from these, have been instrumental in bringing about a re-orientation of the broadcasting policy in

India—at least, in so far as its technical aspect is concerned. Among other things, he advised against any premature and costly experiments with “ultra short-wave” broadcasting. He was also not in favour of devoting too much attention to Bombay and Calcutta. An increase in their respective aerial radii, he convincingly argued, would mostly benefit ships in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal on the one hand, and the thinly-populated areas of Sind and Assam on the other. He emphasized, too, the need for intensive radio research, and recommended the erection of a small experimental station at Delhi, specifically for research purposes, as well as close co-operation between Indian universities and Indian broadcasting. His recommendations were, for the most part, accepted by the Government and the existing services are now being remodelled on the lines indicated by him.

This, in brief, is the past of broadcasting in India. It is not as inspiring as it might have been. The present situation is, of course, more hopeful. Yet it would be idle to pretend that all, or even the major, difficulties have been resolved. The growth of broadcasting in India must, of necessity, be a slow and laborious process. For India is a queer mixture of Brobdingnag and Lilliput. The problems facing her are gigantic; the means she possesses of dealing with them are often hopelessly inadequate. Broadcasting is an excellent example of this tragic contrast. Two years ago, in an article in *Electrotechnics*, Mr. Sreenivassan, of the Mysore University, outlined a “modest” plan for a broadcasting organization to serve all interests and requirements of the Indian public. I had an opportunity of discussing the article with Mr. Fielden prior to his departure for India, and in the main he agreed with its conclusions. Mr. Sreenivassan’s “modest” scheme proposed the installation of five national transmitting stations and sixty regional stations, with an additional five short-wave transmitters for long-distance international broadcasts.

The gap between what exists at present and what is required need hardly be stressed. There are today—in addition to the stations at Bombay, Calcutta, and Delhi—no more than six very small stations in provincial towns, with power ranging between 100 watts to one kilowatt. The number of wireless licences

issued is less than 40,000, even at the most liberal estimate. The budget grant for broadcasting purposes is considerably less than a hundred thousand pounds. The full significance of these facts emerges only when we realize that the maintenance of the scheme proposed by Mr. Sreenivassan would require—as an immediate objective—anything from five to six million paying listeners. Its initial cost of construction would probably demand the diversion of the expenditure on India's Army to broadcasting—for some years to come, at any rate ; and nobody contemplates such drastic redistribution of the budget items. Even the Congress knows that the Faqir of Ipi is not yet dead, nor shows any symptoms of senile decay.

The bewildering linguistic diversity of India makes the practical task of broadcasting an exceedingly complicated affair. It is true that roughly about fifty per cent. of the population understands Hindustani, that with a little more effort it could become the *lingua franca* of India, and that radio and the talkies are the agencies most likely to help it to achieve that position. Nevertheless, the vernaculars are still the best media for reaching the masses ; and broadcasting, which cannot survive without mass support, must also make adequate provision for programmes in the chief vernaculars of the country. This is, in fact, the policy that is being pursued. Indeed, the broadcasting authorities in India are finding that there is a substantial demand for broadcasts in some of the major dialects, of which there are nearly two hundred. This is hardly surprising. Even after so many centuries of linguistic assimilation, the Welsh remain adamant in their insistence on broadcasts in their own tongue ; and it is not on St. Andrew's Day alone that the ether may be "tapped" by souls who pine for a liberal measure of Gaelic gaiety. Russia, too, has found that, in propagating the gospel of Marx among the peoples of some of her distant soviets, the local dialects are the most effective weapon of dialectics. Similarly, if broadcasting in India is to realize its maximum educational utility, it cannot afford to ignore dialects altogether.

Closely allied with the linguistic difficulties of broadcasting in India is the problem raised by cultural differences which cut across the peoples living in different parts of the country. They are reflected not only in their social habits, but also in their

æsthetic values. The issue has an intimate bearing on broadcasting. A quick-step relayed from Ultima Thule would carry a thrill of delight through countless human breasts anywhere between the Pacific seaboard and the western shores of the Black Sea. This applies equally to higher forms of radio entertainment. As far as tastes in these matters are concerned, Geography does not count for very much in the Western World today. But Geography is still a factor to be reckoned with when we are dealing with the broadcasting problems of India. The South Indian music, for instance, conveys little to a man coming from the North. A Mohammedan from the Punjab or the United Provinces, who has drunk deep at the fountain-head of Persian melody and lyricism, would find the metaphysical murmurings of a Madrasi to be a source of amusement rather than æsthetic experience and ecstasy. It is true that the day when India will be sharing in the felicitous cosmopolitan uniformity of our age is not far distant. But that day has yet to dawn.

There is another point which it is pertinent to raise. Broadcasting in India at present is being run by the Government. This is, no doubt, inevitable—at present. It is obvious, however, that no broadcasting scheme in India stands a chance of success if it fixes as its aim that of becoming a bureaucratic department. A Government which pays the piper is bound also to call the tune. Besides, one must take into consideration the peculiar conditions prevailing in India. Anything coming from the Government—even when inspired by the best of motives—is viewed with extreme, often quite unreasonable, mistrust and suspicion. A service run permanently as a Government monopoly is likely to be in a great measure self-frustrating, since it would not touch the mass of the people sufficiently to exercise the educative influence which might be expected from an autonomous broadcasting service. Indian broadcasting, if it is to realize its full potentialities, must work towards the ultimate objective of independence from State control.

In the foregoing survey I have tended to emphasize the obstacles which stand in the way of radio development in India. Demonstrably, they are formidable. To say this, however, is not to suggest that they are insuperable. It is, after all, a human prerogative to overcome difficulties. The greatest difficulty of

all in the present case was to make a start ; and a start has been made. Particularly, during the past eighteen months there has been an appreciable acceleration of the pace of radio expansion in India. The impossible, of course, cannot be achieved ; but no time is being lost in achieving what is possible. Two years ago there were only the stations at Bombay and Calcutta. Today, besides the comparatively high-power station at Delhi, there are stations at Lahore, Madras, Dacca, Peshawar, Dehra Dun, Allahabad, and Hyderabad (Deccan). Lucknow and Trichinopoly are shortly to become links in the national broadcasting system. Programmes have improved greatly both in variety and interest ; they include items so diverse as classical European music and veterinary talks. The aim of the broadcasting authorities is not merely to provide the needs of the educated urban middle class ; they are even more anxious to enlist the support of the vast rural population. All-India Radio, as the Indian broadcasting organization is now called, has distributed a number of free community receivers for use in villages. Its Research Department is devoting a great deal of attention to the question of providing service facilities for rural areas where the maintenance of batteries presents considerable difficulties ; and one ingenious way of generating the requisite power, which is now being tried, is from the back-wheel of a bicycle. The Research Department has also carried out intensive experimentation with a view to construction of a cheap standard community set, and some of its experimental village sets are actually in use in villages round Delhi. Further, it has been considering the proposal of attaching slot machines to the community receivers which would enable the villagers, who are willing to pay, to draw out their measure of etheric entertainment whenever they feel a desire for it. In planning the broadcasts due regard is being given to those traditional literary and artistic forms—such as, for instance, village music and folk lore—which were in grave danger of becoming extinct. Finally, it is already clear that the radio industry is an economic asset of no small importance. The number of people employed directly or indirectly by it is bound to increase considerably in the next few years—especially since it has been found that a great part of the wireless equipment can be manufactured in India more cheaply than it can be imported.

The educative aspect of broadcasting is so far-reaching that it cannot be over-emphasized. The Anglo-Indian scribes have been responsible for spreading a very distorted view of the Indian character in so far as they have represented it as being dismally conservative. The remarkable changes which have taken place in the Indian scene since the War should serve as a salutary corrective to those who have fostered the preposterous myth of "the Unchanging East." For all its apparent insularity and self-complacency, there is at the root of the Indian mind a profound philosophic strain which recognizes change as something inevitable in a world of transient phenomena. This enables it to accept new things with a certain measure of equanimity. The ease with which the Indian public has accepted the railways, the motor-bus, the cinema, the radio, and even the aeroplane is an evidence of this trait in the Indian character. What is more, the Indian public seems to like these new things. This passion for novelty has, in some instances, evoked loud laments from pessimistic prophets who see in it the death-warrant of all that is good, and true, and beautiful in Indian culture. I am not prepared to share their despair. There is nothing evil in the desire for newness ; indeed, I believe it to be essentially good. There is, of course, a right and wrong way of exploiting this impulse ; and the way is the test. It is here that broadcasting can be of immense service to India. The choice is ours.

AUTUMN LOVE

A white colt
 feeds in my meadow,
Yesternight empty ;
 waking I watched him.
Silken his sides,
 his hoofs of silver.
I stretched out my hand,
 he came to me.

His neck
 has never known bridle ;
His back
 has never borne saddle ;
Yet he stood quiet
 and let me mount him.

Over the grasses,
 between the hedges,
Swiftly, gently,
 at first he bore me.
Suddenly spread
 great wings of silver.

Up ! up ! up for ever !
 Earth lost,
 Heaven nearing,
 Clouds blinding,
 Space beneath me,
Knees clinging
 under those pinions.

How could I dare
 that splendid venture !
How can I bear
 now to forego it.
Yet that wild one
 must leave my meadow.

Still there he grazes,
 silken, supple.
Wonder his dam,
 his sire Worship. . . .
Ah ! on what morning
 shall I find my field empty ?

QUAESTOR.

BELGIAN ANXIETIES

BY CHARLES TOWER

THE coming and going of distinguished statesmen in recent weeks between Brussels and European countries, while flattering, perhaps, in some measure to Belgian self-esteem, is a sign unfortunately less of the strength of Belgium's international position than of its uncertainty. Public attention was directed in the middle of the month chiefly to the dramatic electoral contest between the "Rexist" leader, M. Degrelle, and the Premier, M. van Zeeland. But the contest, like the whole appearance of "Rexism" as a feature of Belgian political life, was in reality only a symptom of the international unrest in Europe and of the diplomatic maze through which Belgium finds it difficult to find her way. It is because "Rexism" is a symptom of general European *malaise* rather than specifically of some new Belgian domestic tendency that too much importance, rather than too little, may easily be attached to the phenomenon and to the result of the election of April 11th.

If M. Degrelle expected to enhance his domestic political position by the election fought on April 11th, he was undeceived. The Prime Minister, who took up the challenge after securing a legislative prohibition on any further such experiments, rallied an even stronger support than had been expected. M. Degrelle and his "Rexists" failed, in particular, to deter Catholics from supporting M. van Zeeland, in spite of the fact that the Premier had the awkward support of the Communists. The Catholics' suspicion of Communism on religious grounds could, in fact, hardly be greater than their distrust of right-wing extremists, a fact which probably had something to do with the pronouncement in favour of M. van Zeeland made by the Belgian Primate on the eve of the election. The struggle between Nazism and the Catholic Church is obvious, but Catholics have recently had some warnings that Signor Mussolini also may have in-

terpreted his agreement with the Vatican to imply a liberty in respect, for example, of the prohibition of Catholic missionary work in Africa, such as the Vatican could not possibly approve. There was another domestic factor which obviously operated against "Rex." Seeking support wherever it might be found, M. Degrelle, who owed his first encouragement to the French-speaking Walloons, sought a working agreement with the Fleming separatists. It is doubtless true, as he asserted, that he has had no intention of actually pursuing a definitely separatist policy if he succeeded in obtaining power in Belgium, but at least he gave the Flemings to understand that he coquetted with the idea of Flemings and Walloons managing each their own affairs with a very loose connection through the Crown.

There was here, however, an obvious inconsistency, since any version of Fascism or Nazism must require pre-eminently a rigidly centralised control, a regime of such a kind as to abolish political parties by destroying the conditions which either justify or produce them. But such a rigid control is plainly inconsistent with the kind of federation offered to the Flemings.

It would be a mistake, of course, to suggest that the domestic situation offered no cards to a right-wing revolutionary movement. In the first place, M. Degrelle himself undoubtedly possesses a great power of appeal to crowds. He himself has described this appeal as "electrical;" at any rate it has stimulated Belgian politics and at times enabled the young Rexist leader to attract very large audiences. But apart from his personal appeal, M. Degrelle reckoned with a certain weariness in Belgium of the existing political parties. They have seemed to possess a superfluity of leaders without coherent followings. For example, the once great "Catholic" party, which provided a great majority of the Belgian Governments from the middle of the last century, has in recent years appeared so fissiparous as to make its political appeal much less influential. There are a number of divisions of the party, which are apt to pursue sectional rather than general party interests, and whose tendency in any case is felt by many Belgians to cause national interests to be subordinated to the necessity for keeping together the divergent elements of the Catholic fold. This is more or less the complaint made everywhere of Continental Parliamentarism, namely,

that it has produced no strong and uniform governing majority but only Chambers, almost infinitely subdivided, subordinating national interests to those of their own cliques.

Today, democracy is likely to find that its much-pondered decisions, however right in themselves, cannot mature their due fruits because the swiftly-operating dictatorships intervene. Speed, it is argued, not academic accuracy, is the essence of the modern political contract. This seems certainly to be one of the arguments which have so far been used as pace-makers for the authoritarian states in the international field, and some doubt is likely to be felt whether the Rexist defeat in Brussels means a turning in this field of the authoritarian tide. M. Degrelle might argue, not without some show of reason, that the Government under M. van Zeeland has in practice stolen the thunder of his foreign policy. True, he has kept it judiciously vague in many respects, and in particular has sought so far to differentiate it from Nazism and Fascism as to quieten the minds of possible supporters who might fear that if given political power he would make of Belgium little more than a continuation of the "Berlin-Rome" axis. There is little doubt that a striking Rexist success on April 11th—which by no means meant that M. Degrelle must actually win the seat—would have encouraged in Berlin hopes of such a development, not only on its own account, but because it would have been likely to strengthen the attachment of Signor Mussolini to the "axis", of whose advantages to Italy, if there were a convenient alternative, not all highly-placed Italians are necessarily convinced. M. Degrelle appears now most unlikely to be provided with an opportunity—even if he desired it—of converting Belgium to a political ideology sympathetic to that of the "axis," and then of making the country itself a political adjunct of the axis.

But the conversion of Belgium, though doubtless desirable, was never an essential feature of "axis" policy. Indeed, from the German point of view, all that was ever necessary was that Belgium should be so far neutral as to deny passage through or over her country to French or British forces—whether operating under direct League Council requisition or not—in support of an Eastern European country adjudged the victim of unprovoked aggression.

As far as Belgium's strategical position is concerned, it presumably does not matter whether Germany really fears some kind of "unprovoked" aggression by Russia *via* Czechoslovakia, or merely desires to ensure for herself freedom to adjust her frontiers eastwards as she desires. In either case her object must be to put up a barrier westwards against prompt French action in support of Czechoslovakia, or Austria, or Poland, or, eventually, Russia. It is the stalemating of France on the Rhineland which Germany has steadily sought. Herr Stresemann himself, as was revealed after his death, looked upon the original Locarno treaties as giving Germany a guarantee of protection in the west while she reconstituted her domestic strength. But Hitler did not believe that he could trust the Locarno system to protect Germany's western frontier, since it was improbable that the purposes for which Nazi Germany needed security would be looked upon in Britain and France as legitimate. When he had defied the guarantors of Rhenish demilitarisation, he set to work at once to construct the most formidable barrier possible along the French frontier. His object was, doubtless, to keep the French out of the Rhineland rather than to provide a basis for invasion of France.

But to protect the Western frontier he needs also to ensure that no attack will be possible through, and with the aid of, Belgium. The system of German defences may by now be reasonably complete along the Belgian frontier also, but the object of German policy must be to make of Belgium a buffer-state for Germany. This means, however, that in no circumstances must Belgian policy be aligned with that of France. It will not suffice for Germany that Belgium shall cease to be committed to a system of mutual defence with Britain and France. Her neutrality must be as absolute and unconditional as that of Switzerland. There can hardly be any doubt on this point, for the conditions demanded by Germany for recognition of Belgian neutrality and territorial inviolability were set out plainly in one of the familiar "semi-official" Berlin messages to the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of April 9th. "The Belgians know our standpoint," said the message. "There can be no semi-independence and no semi-neutrality. Either Belgium takes part in the West-European combinations or she keeps away from them. Any future uni-

lateral obligation or even agreement for certain eventualities must make the Belgian desire for inviolability unfulfillable."

This far-reaching German demand can only mean that in no circumstances and in no eventuality must Belgium be aligned with a Western combination. She must not even have "staff-conversations" with France and Britain. That is to say, there must be no pre-arranged plan of concerted military action even for the defence of Belgium by Britain and France: still less, of course, must there be any arrangements with Belgium for joint action, under the League, for the defence by the Western Powers of any state in Eastern and Central Europe in the event of German aggression. So determined has Germany been to eliminate such concerted action that in her proposals for the substitution of a new scheme of Belgian guarantee for the old Locarno system, she carefully insisted that the League should have no part at all in the matter, even to the extent of adjudicating on any claim that the new guarantees had been violated. To put the matter succinctly, Germany apparently offers Belgium a guarantee of inviolability provided that in no circumstances whatever, whether they are or are not covered by Covenant obligations, shall Belgian territory be used for action against her.

What Germany stands to gain by such an undertaking, if she can secure it, is obvious. She breaks up the Western combination, involves France, almost certainly, in an enormous increase of cost for defence along the Belgian frontier, and compels her to withdraw garrison troops permanently from other quarters to the new defences. She may reckon that in these circumstances French action from the West is stalemated. The consequence must be a great diminution of France's influence in Central, Eastern, and South-Eastern Europe. The result, Germany doubtless expects, will be to give her in those areas so dominating a position that she will be able to secure many useful concessions without fighting, and will have a much freer hand, if necessary, to employ force. There are a certain number of people in this and in other countries who are unable to discover any good reason why Germany should not be allowed to obtain that kind of hegemony. For these, presumably, the future of Belgium under such a guarantee of inviolability as Germany offers must be a matter of indifference. But, in fact, once

established in the desired position of complete Continental dominance Germany would be able without any great likelihood of interference to "adjust" frontiers, "re-absorb" German minorities, and otherwise remake the map of Europe, at the cost of all the small independent countries, as she might choose. On no ground could such a development be a matter of indifference to this country, because of the high probability—to say the least of it—that Germany, so fortified, would proceed to put pressure on us also for surrender of such territory as she might covet. The German colonial programme, as far as the Empire is concerned, depends mainly upon previous attainment of an inexpugnable domination over the Continent.

But since, in the circumstances described, the smaller countries of Europe, including Belgium, would eventually be completely at Germany's mercy, it is natural to ask whether Belgium is really likely to be tempted to co-operate in producing them. In part, no doubt, there is a revulsion of all Belgian feeling, Walloon as well as Fleming, against a position which they may have felt to be too dependent on French policy. It is true that the Franco-Soviet treaty was the work, not of M. Blum and the Front Populaire, but of MM. Barthou and Laval. It was a substitution for the then recognizably inadequate entente with Britain. British unilateral disarmament was therefore one cause of the Franco-Soviet treaty. But, ultimately, of course, that pact can be traced to the collapse of the dual guarantee of France by the United States and Britain which was annexed to the original treaties of peace. Intelligent Belgians, accordingly, can hardly see in the Franco-Soviet treaty a deliberate subservience of France to Russian Communism. Yet they may doubtless feel that Left-wing extremism has of late displayed an uncomfortably obvious influence in French domestic affairs such as they have no desire to see spread to their own country. It is matter of comment, in quarters which have previously not grudged M. Blum admiration of his political skill, that he failed after the Clichy disorders to display the judicial lack of prejudice which might at the time so greatly have strengthened his position. Here, then, is one reason for a slackening of the original Belgian confidence in the close treaty-association with France. Another factor, doubtless, is the now steadily increasing Flemish element in

Belgium. At the time of the 1930 census, nearly 53 per cent. of those Belgians who only speak one language (about six and a half out of rather more than eight millions) spoke Flemish, while in the preceding decade the population of the Flemish provinces had increased more than three times as much as that of the Walloon. An "inferiority-complex," based largely on language, has been developed into a distrust of France, and especially of such a close political association as was believed to secure the continual political dominance of the French-speaking element in Belgium.

But while it might have been necessary, in any case, for Belgian governmental policy to take some account of this Flemish demand for a more independent foreign policy, that can hardly explain the change in Belgian orientation which was marked by the speech of King Leopold in the autumn of last year. At the root of Belgium's difficulty lies, undoubtedly, the failure of the Locarno system of guarantors against remilitarisation of the Rhineland, no less than of the League system of mutual security against aggression. There was no doubt at all of the action which on a strict interpretation of the Locarno treaties certainly could, and presumably ought to, have been taken in March, 1936, by France and the guarantors, Britain and Italy. Equally there could in reality be no doubt of the moral obligation, derived from the Covenant, which rested on the League Powers when Italy invaded Abyssinia. But in neither case were the obligations taken up. France would not, and Britain, presumably, could not. The lesson was not likely to be lost either in Belgium or in the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Faced by a determined aggressor or treaty-violator, the League Powers were shown to be unprepared in either case to take up their challenge.

So soon as that was obvious, Belgians, Walloons as well as Flemish, were inevitably led to consider whether they could expect that *any* system of mutual security, regional like the Locarno Pacts or general like the Covenant, would in fact bring to them the immediate aid of their co-signatories in such pacts if they were attacked. Even if they did receive prompt military assistance, they must expect once more to suffer the brunt of the early fighting; while their territory nowadays would necessarily suffer heavily from air combats fought over it. This disadvantage

might have been accepted as inevitable if there had not now been added the considerable uncertainty as to whether the challenge of an attack on Belgian territory would be taken up at all. The likelihood of Belgium, though neutral, remaining unaffected after a war fought successfully by Germany or even after successful domination of Central and Eastern Europe by Germany without a war, may not appear very high to the individual Belgian. But at any rate neutrality and guaranteed inviolability in any conflict might seem to many Belgians to offer some hope of escaping the penalties of their geographical position in the event of a European war. Yet there is plainly a limit in this direction beyond which Belgian policy will not go.

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* has intimated that Germany demands from Belgium in return for a certificate of neutrality and inviolability a repudiation in effect of all actual or contingent obligations deriving from any system of mutual security, regional or general. But Belgium has not been the only recipient of this German offer. Holland was also offered something of the kind and rejected it, in effect, because she declined to have her policy so bound for the future. It would be a derogation from her sovereignty to give such an undertaking. She wished, it seems, to retain her right of judgment of circumstances as they may arise. Nothing that has been said in Belgium in the past twelve months by anyone with recognizable authority has suggested that Belgium is less determined than Holland to preserve her right to decide her course of action as circumstances may appear to her to demand. Indeed, the insistence laid on her *independence* suggests strongly that she would be as little willing to give the comprehensive undertakings demanded by Germany as she has been to retain, any longer than could be avoided, the positive commitment to France and Britain involved in the temporary agreement set up last year as a substitute for the Locarno guarantees.

BLAS, THE KNIFE-GRINDER

BY PÍO BAROJA

(Translated from the Spanish by V. S. Pritchett)

FOR a Christian it is sad and disconcerting to reflect that oppressed people, taken individually or collectively, rarely emerge from their wretchedness but remain sunk forever sullen and revengeful in their misery. Nothing makes a man so moral as success ; nothing drives him so readily to vice as failure. If only life followed the course of popular fiction and melodrama or imitated the novels of Dickens and Tolstoy, where the poor and the humble are always good and the rich are always wicked ! But life is not like this. Misery and misfortune brings forth bitterness, ill-will, and spleen, just as happiness brings out a certain benevolence even in people of no particular character. And this though their mere comfort or their self-love has provided the impulse. It would be false to say that human life is ruled entirely by economic conditions, but there is no doubt that they do have a great influence upon us. Moreover, a man's life is not coloured by his present and individual sufferings only, but also by past troubles and tribulation in which others have shared. A man without knowing it fulfils the destiny of his race.

Some forty years ago I went as a doctor to a small spa in the Spanish Basque Province of Guipuzcoa. There were three towns in the district, the principal one being Cestona which boasted two doctors, while the spa itself enjoyed the services of a famous specialist who used to come up from Madrid for the summer. The winter was the busy time, but in the summer there was little or nothing to do. A doctor could leave the neighbourhood to carry on without him and he would not be missed. So about August I went away on holiday to the French side of the Basque region, and returned afterwards into Spain through the mountain country of Navarre. In one of the larger towns of this region I got to know an old doctor, a kindly and

intelligent man who had had a very hard life. He had been left a widower. Then his only daughter whom he adored died tragically in the flower of her youth, just before her wedding day. The old doctor and I used to talk of the customs and superstitions of the villages. There were still quack healers of both sexes : wise women who cured the sick by means of spells and prayers, and old witch doctors who made poultices and potions out of herbs.

These superstitions are common enough anywhere. In the Basque provinces at that time, one of the commonest beliefs was that hernias in children could be cured by reciting prayers and passing the child three times through the cleft in a tree branch, which had split in half, at midnight on some given day like Christmas Day or St. John's Eve. If the torn branch came together in the course of time it was a sign that the hernia of the child was completely cured.

The most interesting anthropological curiosity in the neighbourhood where my colleague lived, however, was a race of outcasts known as the Agotes. The doctor had a weakness for the bottle, and between the sips once he told me a story about these people.

It is a great many years, he said, since I first came to be the doctor in this neighbourhood. After six months as a lodger in the house of the sacristan near the church, I left him to set up house on my own and to marry. My wife came from Madrid. The house I took was a very large one and very fine, although in bad repair, lying between the road and the river. It had belonged to a politician of some standing.

In the winter there was a great deal of work to do, but when the better weather came I had time on my hands, and used to spend it visiting a few friends, looking after the garden, and fishing in the river from the trunk of a tree which leaned over the water. I used to go out for long walks or rides on horseback, but when I married my way of living changed. I became very sedentary. We were so happy together in our house that we very rarely went out. We contented ourselves with watching the people pass by on the road by cart or carriage, from the baker on his rounds in the morning to the diligence which used to turn up regularly every evening with its lamps lit.

One of the people we used to see was a tottering old woman with very aquiline features who used to go about in black. She was a white-haired, melancholy woman. A youngster of about fourteen or fifteen used to be with her: a graceful, well set up lad very like his mother. Whenever they passed the old woman and the child were always carrying in their hands handfuls of some kind of grass.

I made enquiries about the old woman, and I learned that she was one of the quack healers of the village. She made herb potions, and people said she put a drop or two of lizard's blood and toad's blood in them. The old woman lived in a half ruined mill. I gathered she hated doctors who, it seemed, had frequently had the law on her for improper practices, and she had once or twice been heard to say she would have the doctor and the local constable put into a barrel and flung from the top of one of the nearby mountains. (The doctor in question was this colleague of mine.) The old woman didn't talk much, and was very surly and shy. I came across her once up in the hills and looked out for a chance to have a word with her, but she was too quick for me. Every time she saw me she scurried away.

However, once I did succeed in speaking to her. One day, when it was raining in torrents, I took shelter in a cave which they call Erroicha in these parts. There was a kind of vestibule which was fairly large, and I could see the light of a fire glowing further inside. By a fire they had built were the old woman and the boy. The walls and the roof of the cave were thick with bats which clung to the crannies of the rock by the claws in their wings. When the old woman threw more sticks on the fire the flames leapt up and the bats started squealing. They were feeling the heat. "Granny, granny," the child called out, "they're burning!" "Let them burn," said the old woman. "They're evil things—and not the only ones either."

The old lady was startled when she saw me. When she realised I was the new doctor she was even more alarmed, but I calmed her by telling her that I hadn't the slightest desire to denounce her or interfere with her in any way. She assured me that in her potions she used nothing but herbs and grasses, and that it was all a lie that she used toad's blood, lizard blood, or the

skins of snakes. She laid a great deal of stress on this. It seemed to be important to her.

After that, whenever she passed by my house, she used to hold up her armful of grasses or herbs so that I could see them. My wife used to give food to the boy, biscuits, plums or nuts, and he took them very shyly.

The old woman had protectors among some of the wealthier women in local society. There were two spinsters who were sisters and who had an ancient house with a gothic tower near the river. The tower was half in ruins, and had been turned into a lodging place for labourers with stalls for cattle and a hay loft. These two sisters often talked to my wife and me about the old woman. They always referred to her with amusement as Madame Magdalena—Andre Madalen in Basque.

Andre Madalen lived in the abandoned mill near the river. She was a widow. Her husband had been a labourer from Arizcun, the pure Agote type. He went by the nickname of "Trucuman," a word with no meaning at all either in Spanish or in Basque, but which was probably a corruption of the word "Truchiman," which means rogue and trickster. These Agotes are a very mysterious and despised people, who live in the neighbourhood of Arizcun in an outlying parish or, rather, a separate village on the hillside called Bozate. In France they are called *cagots*. They are a race of hunted outcasts who have for centuries been driven outside the pale of ordinary society. They first appeared on both sides of the Pyrenees at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Some historians hold that they were originally lepers, and that this was the cause of the hostility and contempt which other people had for them: other writers have held that they were Moors, others that they were Aryan heretics, the remnants of the Visigoths whom Clovis defeated in the battle of Vouillé. Certainly nobody knows whether they are semitic or German. All that is known is that the Basques and the Gascons hated them from the beginning, and that for ever afterwards the barrier has been insuperable.

In the Middle Ages and for a long time after there was always a separate entrance for the Agotes in the churches of the villages where they lived. They sat apart and had their own font. They were not permitted to dip their fingers in the same holy

water. They were made to bear a red badge of a duck's foot on their shoulder, and large enough to be seen at a distance. The Agotes were usually millers, carpenters and waggoners, weavers, fishermen and tambourine players. They had the reputation of being vain, headstrong, and lascivious liars. For three or four leagues around Arizcun they were taunted by the children who used to run after them crying: "Agote!" The Agotes got back on their persecutors by calling them *perlutas*, that is hairy-pates, because the Basques used to wear their hair long in the old days.

Trucuman and Andre Madalen had three sons, the eldest of whom married and then very shortly died, leaving a child; the second one was Blas, and the third a daughter called Mari Bautista.

Blas, the knife-grinder, who was sometimes known by the family nickname of Trucuman, took after his father. He bore no resemblance to his mother whatever. At that time he was a chubby fellow, thirty years of age, with a broad face and red hair. He was flat-nosed, knock-kneed, and left-handed. He had a crafty and shrewish expression. He wore steel spectacles and—in the summer at any rate—he used to go about in a blue calico coat and a grey cap, and he used to have a big metal box strapped across him by a bandolier. The box contained herbs. He wasn't the Basque type. He seemed even to go out of his way not to look like a Basque. It was partly his cap which gave him a foreign air, for the Basques, of course, wear berets, and he used to speak Spanish better than the people thereabouts.

Actually Blas, the knife-grinder, had lived some time in France. He had been a fisherman, a street singer, and a clog maker. He had the reputation of being an expert with medicinal herbs, and was supposed to be able to pick up vipers in his hands and, gripping them by the neck, to twist them round and round until he strangled them to death. He used the vipers in the manufacture of medicinal plasters—so the story went. On fine days Blas used to go through the town with his knife and scissor-grinding machine, but instead of carrying it on his shoulder as he usually did he had a snug little pony and cart. In later years people used to swear that Blas was a crook in the anonymous and blackmailing letter industry.

Andre Madalen's family were not liked in the town. There were one or two occasions, on Saturday nights, when the local youths went down from the tavern to the old mill and shouted out in Basque :

Madame Madalen, Madame Madalen,
A jar of oil today;
Mother will stump up
When Dad gets his pay,

and again,

Madame Madalen, Madame Madalen of the mill,
Open your door,
Here comes your man full of wine to the sill.

Once or twice when he heard these songs, Blas, the knife-grinder, opened the window and shouted back : " Drunken-swine ! louts ! Go and scream some other door down." The rowdies took no notice of this but yelled back with other songs, and even threw stones at the windows and doors of the mill. On the following day if Blas came across any of these youths he would roar : " If you come round screaming at my house again, I'll get my musket out and floor you."

Mari Bautista, the sister of Blas, was a fat box-like woman, pale and flat-nosed like her brother. She wore spectacles too. She used to wear layers of old skirts as if to make herself look even fatter, and the corner boys used to call her the potato sack. She had been a nursemaid in many houses until people could stand her impudent tongue and her bad temper no longer. She beat the children she looked after, and was always losing her jobs. Mari Bautista had a love affair with a *carabinero* who let her down, and as the result of this deceit she left the town and went to a French village near Bayonne for two years with some kind of witch woman who did bone-setting, made potions, and taught her the secrets of her art. One of her secrets was a way of curing some mysterious stomach complaint by stretching the sick person's arms. There is no doubt that some hysterical people really did get better after these gymnastic exercises.

Mari Bautista had a low opinion of the town and its people. The little boy called Joaquincho, who was the nephew of Andre Madalen, was utterly unlike his aunt and uncle. He took after his grandmother and was very elegant. He had black hair with

dark eyes and fine aquiline features. He was a handsome child and would have looked even more so if he had not always been dirty, tousled, and in rags.

No one ever had a good word to say about the family at the mill. There was always talk of some smuggling scandal or some swindle on the part of Blas, or some abortion business in which Mari Bautista, the "potato-sack," had got mixed up, when it was not some love potion which had nearly killed somebody, or the old woman, Andre Madalen, had been fighting or screaming in the street with a neighbour or the police.

* * *

One night when I was sitting by the kitchen fire reading one of the old politician's books there was a violent knocking at the door.

"What is it," I called.

"Is the doctor in?"

"Yes, who is it?"

"It's the constable."

"What's the matter?"

"An old woman has just fallen off the top of the rock near the river. I think she has killed herself. Come quickly."

I pulled on my boots, took an umbrella, and joined the constable. We went through the town and came out at a place where the river makes a still pool between the rocks which are built up here into a ravine only wide enough for the road to pass. This gloomy spot is called in Basque *Osinbeltz*, the Black Hell.

The constable and I arrived at the river's brink. We turned off to the right into the pit of a quarry which was full of blocks of stone. A little lamp was burning in the darkness. It was carried by the magistrate's clerk. We joined the party and then went on to examine the body of the woman. When the light of the lamp fell on her I saw at once by the white hair and black dress that she was Madame Magdalena of the mill. There was nothing to be done. The body was stiff and cold; she had been dead three or four hours. "Did she commit suicide?" the clerk asked. "I don't think so," I said. "She was probably carrying plants, and, being short-sighted, she took a slippery path and fell."

A bunch of plants very tightly held in her right hand bore this out. The body of the old woman was taken to the mortuary, and the following day I had to go and conduct a post-mortem. The constable and the coffin maker were with me, and just as I was beginning, Blas came in with his sister.

Blas said: "Are you going to open my mother's body?" I replied that I was obliged by law to do so, but that as in this case the cause of death was clear and evident I would refrain. Blas and his sister made no reply to this. They were completely indifferent. They merely asked if they might take away their mother's clothes. I said they could, and they took away a bundle of miserable black rags, a few copper coins, a chain with some medals on it and scapulas, and a little book, a worn-out and greasy catechism.

After this Blas and his sister went off, and I returned to my house. The story started that Blas had taken his mother up to the top of the quarry and had pushed her over the edge. But this was pure invention.

Eight or nine months went by, and the town forgot about the family of Andre Madalen. Then a woman came to my house to tell me that she had been at the mill where Blas lived to see the little boy. He was very ill, and the uncle and aunt were ill-treating him. They made him work and kept him without food, and a woman who had gone to live with Blas (who was known as La Napoleona) was continually beating him. I went to the mill and saw at once that the child was being very inhumanly treated. He slept in a corner of the loft without any blanket, his clothes were in rags and he was weak and feverish. I examined him and discovered he was tubercular.

I called Blas and upbraided him for having neglected the sick child in this manner. He became insolent, and replied that he could not look after the boy, that he had enough work to do as it was. As for the beating he professed ignorance. He had no idea whether the woman who lived with him was in the habit of beating the child or not. I said I was going to report the whole matter to the authorities and have the child removed to hospital. "A good job, too, and good riddance," he said. When I told the child that we were going to take him to the hospital he began

to cry. "Don't cry, little fellow," I said; "you will be much better off than you are here. They will put you in a nice clean room, in a white bed, and you'll have lovely things to eat. The nuns will tell you stories and you'll soon be better." The child still whimpered, but he was happy enough in the hospital. Alas, he did not recover. His tuberculosis was in an advanced state, and he died very shortly. I saw with my own eyes the marks of the blows which his uncle and aunt had given him.

Blas, the knife-grinder, and his sister Mari Bautista and the woman they called La Napoleona continued to disgust the town. They got drunk, they blasphemed, and they fought. Blas was always mixed up in some dirty business to do with contraband or some similar swindle. At last something serious occurred. There was a mining company founded by a French priest, an ex-workman called Carnaval (who, it was discovered later, was in some damaged coin deal), and a German. The tale was put round that certain disused mines in the neighbourhood were really very rich, and that they were going to be started up again. The town would make its fortune. There was talk of building a railway to the mine.

Blas, the knife-grinder, emerged as the manager of the mine, paid all the wages and directed the work. It lasted four months. At the end of that time the owner disappeared from the town, and when the workers went to claim their wages which had been deposited in a local office the money turned out to be in forged bank-notes.

Blas fled for a time into the French Basque province, wandering from town to town. Then he went over to South America where he made a lot of money out of a cure for cattle epidemics. Exorcism was the method. He must have enjoyed doing that! He made enough to marry and to start an hotel down on the Mexican Frontier. His hotel was the rendezvous of Indians, bandits, and riff-raff. Later on it became the meeting-place of revolutionaries and communists, and Blas managed to get money out of one side and the other. Then he went to the United States into rum-running, and quickly became very rich; but home-sickness got him, and eventually he turned up in his native town again and went to live at the hotel. He brought his wife, a German woman, and two blonde pallid daughters. The

eldest one was called Evangeline, a clear-eyed and insolent girl like her father ; the name of the other was Magda, who had the grandmother's gloomy Basque character.

Blas, who was now about fifty years old, had the same crafty look as before, but combined with an angry and indolent expression. He was now known as "the American." His temper was irascible, and he was always taking offence. The slightest provocation and there he was cursing and swearing, showing his gold-stopped teeth and drawing his revolver and shouting that he would drill holes into those who crossed him. The eldest daughter, Evangeline, had an affair with the magistrate's clerk. She used to go to his house at night, and in a very short time she was with child. Blas wanted to settle the matter with his gun. The young man did not know what he was up against, and actually thought this was a good opportunity to get a good dowry out of the American, but the two of them quarrelled, and Blas plugged him. The young man took a long time getting better. He nearly died. When he did recover it was Evangeline who refused to marry him.

Blas had to pay heavy compensation to the ex-lover of his daughter, but he was not sent to prison. The next thing he did was to buy a little house and open a tavern below. He and his family lived on one floor, and on the other his sister Mari Bautista, the quack. She had concocted a number of special plasters whose action was half magical and half natural. People came from all parts for them. The tavern soon became the refuge of the riff-raff of the town, smugglers, drunks, and all kinds of agitators. Blas was there in his glory, boasting of his feats in America and of the men he had punctured with his revolver. The younger daughter, Magda, could not stand the place, and became a nun in a gloomy convent at Arizcun. The elder daughter Evangeline, went away with a well-off contractor. Blas spent his time drinking and telling stories of Madero, Pancho Villa, and Calles. He got up in the morning, drank until he could swallow no more, and then went to sleep if off. One day he was discovered dead at the foot of the bed with his eyes starting out of his head. And his face was all black. This led people to say that his death had been a punishment sent by God.

A DISTANT PROSPECT OF SCOTLAND

BY RITCHIE CALDER

THE haberdasher's assistant who tried to sell me tartan socks in the Strand was a MacFarlane ; the barber, who usually shaves me is MacFarlane ; I served on an Old Bailey jury recently with another. None of them were Scots except by a vague, London-forgotten ancestry. If you could inspect the passenger-lists of Coronation visitors, you would probably find MacFarlanes coming from every part of the world—prosperous MacFarlanes from Canada, U.S., Australia, Argentine, Peru, New Zealand, Rhodesia, and China.

But you will find them even more numerous in the cities of England ; there are ninety of them in the London telephone directory—drapers, tailors, typists, manufacturers, boarding-house keepers, merchants, architects, doctors, publishers, and bakers. If you could summon a ceilidh of the Clan, you could muster an army of MacFarlanes. They would come from everywhere except the MacFarlane Country.

There, in the dark glens beyond Arrochar, on Loch Long, which once shivered with the battle-cry of " Loch Sloy," but which echo now only with the eldritch scream of a night bird, the croaking of hoodie-crows or the " seugh " of a torpedo fired at Arrochar, only two of the name remain.

I am not lamenting because the dreaded MacFarlanes no longer sit, like birds of prey, in their eyrie of Tighvechtan (" The Watchtower ") like highwaymen at the gates of the Western Highlands. The modern " hijackers " could teach nothing to the lawless MacFarlanes who levied blackmail even from Rob Roy as he drove his plundered cattle through their " toll-gate " at Tarbert. But the MacFarlanes are symbolic of what has been happening to Scotland.

In the county of Argyllshire, the 1931 census showed a lower population than in 1801 ; it had declined from 81,000 to 63,000.

In Sutherland, it fell from 23,000 to 16,000 ; in Perthshire the decrease was 3.8 per cent. Notice that those decreases took place in a period in which the population of Great Britain increased from 16,350,000 to 44,790,000.

The depopulation of the Highlands is dog-eared history. It begins with the break-up of the clan system after the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. And as an emetic, to those who are sugar-sick with the sentiment of Prince Charlie, I suggest a closer reading of the history of that time ; it may teach them how, with very few exceptions, the Highland chiefs far from being romantic characters, were fighting for their own hands ; out to grab what they could get ; selling "loyalty," which was as trashy as the goods the Lowland bagmen of the time were huckstering in England ; and trafficking in the devotion of the clansmen to the tribal totem. It may remind them, too, how those same clansmen were forced by those same chiefs off the land into emigration. Meagre crofts were replaced by sheep-runs ; the sheep-runs gave way to deer-forests for the wealthy manufacturers and merchants reaping the profits of the industrial revolution. And eventually these deer-forests covered 4,000 square miles of the Highlands. As Mr. Hugh Quigley has pointed out in *A Plan for the Highlands*, the productive yield per acre, per annum, is barely the price of a good-sized cabbage at Covent Garden.

The "one acre and a cabbage" principle has brought economic sterilization to the Highlands. That is a problem which has to be faced. Today 25 per cent. of the Highland workers are unemployed. And lamentable things, too, are happening in the Lowlands. Even the present boom has succeeded only in reducing unemployment to eighteen per cent.

Industrial Scotland is, for all practical purposes, a distressed area. Indeed, it might fairly be said that the whole of Scotland from John o' Groats to the Mull of Galloway, from Cape Wrath to St. Abbs Head is certifiable as a special area. That it is not officially recognized as such is because statesmen apply a kind of "family means test" to the whole country. So Scotland is "flourishing" because there are a few battleships being built on the Clyde. On the upper reaches of the Clyde and along the Firth of Forth is concentrated the bulk of the population of Scotland—1,586,000 in Lanarkshire ; 526,300 in

Midlothian ; 288,500 in Renfrewshire ; and 276,400 in Fife. These and the counties of Aberdeen, Angus, and Ayr—a total of 7 out of 33—contain three-quarters of the population of Scotland, which statistically is computed 150 people per square mile (compared with England's 680 per square mile). Actually, by far the greater part of Scotland has a population of less than one person per square mile. And, while practically every other European country showed an increased population, despite a declining birth-rate, Scotland's population, between 1921 and 1931, fell from 4,882,000 to 4,842,000. The balance of births over deaths was 352,800—7 per cent. increase—and the emigrants numbered 392,000 (almost twice as many as in the previous ten years). So that the net loss by emigration was 8 per cent.

But the human "exports" and "imports" shown by the last census do not tell the whole story of what is happening to Scotland. Indeed, I think they leave off where the real story begins. Scotland, in the last few years, has developed a growing sense of nationalism. In the past two centuries "The Scot" was a kind of generic term for a scattered people who built English industry and commerce, who pioneered in the outposts of the world, helped to build an empire and develop trade in alien countries. But recently Scotsmen have begun to think in terms of boundaries and to talk about "Scottish Nationalism."

To some Scots, it means economic and political separation from England ; to others, it means political and administrative decentralization, taking Scottish domestic questions out of the arid, unsympathetic atmosphere of Westminster, where empty seats mock the Scottish M.P.'s on Scottish nights, and having a legislature and a "Whitehall" in Edinburgh ; to others, it is "just a lot o' blethers." But the claims for Scottish self-government are too vocal and have too much justification to be ridiculed or ignored. And the adherence of the young people is symptomatic.

My contention—although the 1931 census at first sight may seem to contradict it—is that the Scottish nationalist movement ceased to be the pious, Burns-supperish sentiment of pre-war years and became serious, when the Scottish "lad o' pairts" found his ambition being thwarted. From 1560, when Scotland first started its national schools, until the beginning of the present

century, the Scots had advantages over the English. John Knox set out to destroy the Mass by teaching the masses, by instructing them in Latin and Greek so that the priestly monopoly of the Bible should be destroyed for ever. Born of a religious urge, education became itself a religion. The poor could take advantage of it—and did with self-sacrificial avidity. The early emphasis on Latin and Greek has remained, but the natural sciences were recognized in the Scottish Universities nearly 400 years ago. As a result, the Scottish “lad o’ pairts,” however humble his station, could obtain an education which in England belonged mainly to birth or wealth. In Scotland a “public school” meant a public and not a private one. The advantages possessed by the Scot were obvious in the Industrial Revolution. The Royal Society of Edinburgh was the “brains trust” of the Industrial Age.

The Englishman may say “Where would Watt have been without Boulton, the Englishman?” To which the pert reply might be that that was merely another instance of how English finance and industry used Scottish brains. Watt gave England the steam-power of the Industrial Revolution through the inspiration (and £1,000) of Black, of Glasgow University, author of the theory of latent heat. Dr. Roebuck, through the Carron Iron Works, gave it its new methods of producing iron and also its sulphuric acid; Keir, its alkalis, Francis Home its chemical bleaching and the soil-chemistry and the artificial fertilizers which helped to support its swarming population. Telford, Macadam, and Rennie gave it its roads and bridges. Adam Smith, another Scot, was the priest and prophet of the Industrial Revolution. He wrote the “Bible” of Free Trade, free competition, and capitalist individualism.

The Scot, in short, taught the English where wealth lay, how to get and how to use it. And he saw, too, that he, as an individual, got his share of it. That rugged, ruthless individualism was the triumph of the Scot in the commercial and industrial struggle of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. And it is Scotland’s tragedy today.

The Scot revealed a sanctimonious self-righteousness, a business conscience divorced from a religious one, and a granite-hardness in his dealings. Mixing sentiment with business was

as un-Scottish as putting sugar in porridge. True, the Carnegies return to build baths and libraries and provide bursaries, but only after they have wrung from Fortune all the wealth and success they want. With the twentieth century, however, the Compulsory Education Act began to show its effects in England. England's scholarship boys passed through the secondary schools and universities. The number of laboratories in the Science Schools, which at the time of the Education Act had been six, numbered over a thousand at the beginning of the century. England was producing specialists. Its own bright students were winning places in the colonial service, in commerce, in industry, in medicine and in education which had once been the perquisites of the Scottish "lads o' pairs."

The effects are now being felt more noticeably. The Scottish "brain factories" have not been on short-time like the country's other industries. From the elementary schools, 25 per cent. of Scottish pupils go on to higher education, compared with 7 per cent. in England. But the difference in the percentage is more than offset by the aggregate. So the Scottish boy is being left at home. His loss is Scotland's opportunity. For, with proper planning, that reservoir of intelligence which is being dammed up can be used to generate a new industrial power for Scotland.

That is not going to be achieved, however, by each vying with the other in clan tartans or wearing the white cockade of effete and counterfeit sentiment or writing the poetry of a mock "Celtic renaissance." It is not going to be accomplished either by a recrudescence of Scots' individualism: it demands teamwork. The age of the brilliant individualist has gone. A big discovery in the Industrial Revolution might spring, Minerva-like, from the brain of one man, but progress in the Scientific Revolution depends upon co-operative research. Indeed, the obstruction of Scotland's recovery may come from the successful Scots individualists—the "men at the top" in big combines, the financial and industrial "Look-at-me's." I recently heard one declare: "Scottish money is made in English industries." Yes, for the successful Scot, but not for Scotland and the Scottish workers. His idea, apparently, is that the Scots are to become a nation of pensioners, and Scotland a poorhouse for the indigent relatives of the successful emigrants.

Regional planning for Scotland, not in terms of isolation but as part of British economy, is practicable. First of all, Scotland must cease to be merely a map in which absentee directors in London stick little flags to indicate a factory here or a branch warehouse there. Statesmen must cease to think of it merely as an appendix which is apt to go septic occasionally but which can be "physicked" with quack remedies; a septic appendix can poison the whole body politic.

There are obvious ways of making a start, like a great national housing development scheme, road developments, harbours, afforestation, etc., all the things which are needed to bring Scotland up-to-date. But these are the panaceas of the orthodox politician; the plight of Scotland demands a great deal more. The Clyde Valley, I am told by experts, can become a greater fruit-growing area than Kent, Worcestershire, Devon, or Hampshire. Canning can now level up the gluts and the slumps. Sir John Orr has stressed the folly of trying to grow wheat on ungrateful soil, when Scotland could be producing the foods which are demanded by nutrition (to which the public conscience, thanks to him and others, is now alive), and which are essentially dairy, poultry, and market-gardening produce. The "marriage of health and agriculture" could help to beget prosperity for Scotland.

The fishing industry can be extended. The Torry Research Station at Aberdeen has done excellent work on the preservation of fish, and since the future of fishing seems to lie in the factory-ships fishing in Arctic or distant Northern waters, Scotland is the geographical "depot" for such trade. Coastal fishing can be further developed.

Coal is still one of Scotland's greatest assets. Mr. Augustus Carlow, the enlightened and far-seeing head of the Fife Coal Company, is setting up a planning department, divorced entirely from the pit-management and commercial interests of the firm, and devoted to planning 100 years ahead. What he is doing for his concern, Scotland should be doing for its whole coal-industry. Changes are taking place in the coal-resources of Scotland. The indications are that the coking-coals necessary for steel production are becoming depleted in the West, around the existing steel-works. If the Scottish steel industry, already weakened by the

transfer of one of its biggest components to Corby in Northamptonshire, is to develop, it may have to be in the East.

Recently I inquired about the hydrogenating properties of Scottish coal—that is, converting raw coal into oil and petrol—I was told, frankly, that very little was known about it. For a long time, too, it was assumed that Scottish coal was unsuitable for low-temperature carbonization (conversion into smokeless fuel) because it did not “cake” like the ones used in England. (“Caking” means that it comes out of the retorts like enormous candles of coke, which are broken up into lumps of suitable size for use.) But Scottish coal can be carbonized in lumps. It does not fuse, but its usefulness is the same, and it may well travel better than the caked smokeless fuel.

The conversion of coal, either into gas or smokeless fuel, gives by-products. It means creating new industries out of the smoke which raw coal sends up the chimney to poison the atmosphere. I shall not now ride that hobby-horse beyond saying that the Glasgow Corporation made £2,300,000 clear profit out of gas-work “waste” in ten years. Prices are soaring at the moment—so the profits must be even higher now. And, if you think of the possible by-products in terms of a foot-rule, that profit is being made out of an inch.

National industries based on coal by-products, pit-head conversion of coal into smokeless fuel, pithead gas-works (feeding a gas-grid, like the Yorkshire coalfield around Sheffield), pit-head generating stations, and the national planning of the coal industry generally, are contributions to Scotland's revival.

Scotland has already Britain's biggest aluminium plant at Kinlochleven, and, with industrial planning, she can produce light-metals in increasing abundance. I can visualize, now that the metallurgists and the chemists are making magnesium a safe, hard metal, plants for the extraction of magnesium from seawater on the west coast.

The Caledonian Electric Scheme, for the conversion of coal and lime into calcium carbide, has been thrown out by Parliament. I am not going into the economics of calcium carbide production and the contending claims of South Wales; there is, however, certainly a national danger in handing over the water-resources of a whole territory to private enterprise. A monopoly

already controls the lochs and waters of Rannoch. Hydro-electric development is essential to the future of the Highlands, but the schemes need not shackle them. Small, self-contained schemes are practicable. Electricity in the coal areas, electricity in the Highlands—in these you can have the spreading of industry. The drift of industry to the South is less serious than the failure of new industries, now congregating round London, to drift North. Perhaps it is a mischievous thought, but I like to imagine a Calvinistic Highland community (like the one which expelled the provost for attending a Christmas party) making rouge and lipstick for the “painted Jezebels” of the South.

One objection to light industries in the Highlands is their “inaccessibility,” with the consequent cost of transport. There might be a solution to that, only possible under national planning. It is “flat-rate freightage” or “penny-post transport.” If, like letters and telegrams and after-seven telephone calls, freights cost the same whatever the distance, the advantages of congregating around the great market of London would disappear. And the manufacturers in the Midlands would have no competitive advantage over the factory in Dingwall or on Loch Maree.

There is another hope for the Highlands. Professor Stapledon has shown how rough mountain grazings can be converted into real pastures by ploughing up the soil, treating it with certain mineral fertilizers and sowing it with special strains of rich pasture grasses adapted to high altitudes. Thousands of square miles of high moorland and mountainous deer-forest could be brought into production.

What the Scots must aim at is bringing the twentieth century to Scotland, ploughing in, as Stapledon does his moorland, the now sterile individualism of the nineteenth century industrialists, and sowing afresh with modern knowledge and modern resources. Scientific research, scientific planning, scientific industries and scientific management, through these the “lads o’ pairts” can do more for Scotland than by dabbling in Celtic poetry or “Scottish renaissance” prose or masquerading as kilted nationalists and wae’s-ing themselves for Prince Charlie.

STAINS UPON ENGLAND

BY MONTGOMERY BELGION

WHAT impressions will the thousands from overseas who are being led by the Coronation to make their first visit to England this spring take back with them? Most, remember, will not merely watch the procession on May 12th nor stay only in London. Remaining on more or less through the summer, they will be fêted here and entertained there, and go sight-seeing on their own through the length and breadth of the land. It is thus on English life as a whole and on English ways in detail that they will feel inclined to pronounce. What will they say of England once they are again among their own people?

For the most part they will lead the life of tourists. They will be a great deal in public conveyances, in trains, and on the roads. What they will chiefly see is English life from the standpoint of the patron of restaurants and tea-shops and of the resident in hotel or service flat, in boarding-house or house let furnished. And, if we would not deceive ourselves, we must admit that that is the less sunny side of England.

A large number of our omnibuses and tramway-cars are handsomer than those to be found anywhere else. The same may be said—if looks alone are considered—of the rolling-stock in our London and provincial Undergrounds. But think of the noise in some of the tubes and of the stuffiness in many of the tube stations! Then, although at long last a number of much better taxicabs have been put on the London streets, who would seek to impress a foreign visitor by taking him for a ride in one such as is only too likely to be at the head of a rank, when there are cheaper, more powerful, and more comfortable cabs in any French or German provincial town? Then our trains. No doubt British railways can point with justifiable pride to some remarkably fast runs. I yield to none also in my admiration

of the smooth-running on one great system and of the restaurant-car service on another. But comfort by rail in England is far from uniform, and at any rate when this comfort becomes the pseudo-comfort of the third-class Pullman, the traveller on the Continent can thank his stars that it is something from which he is preserved.

I shall be told that the possibility of getting a drink or a cup of tea during the journey is an advantage outweighing its inconveniences. But will any self-controlled adult assert that he is unable to pass two hours in a train without a drink? Apart from that, in a full train, as it happens, the steward third-class will be overworked, and not being, as a rule, at the same time over-competent, he may keep a passenger who has ordered a cup of tea waiting for half an hour before it is supplied. I say, not being, as a rule, over-competent; and there I touch, I fancy, upon one of the weaknesses of mighty Albion: the general poor quality of the English domestic, and especially of the English restaurant, servant. Naturally, in England as elsewhere, admirable servants are not unknown. I have come across them in hotels, clubs, and private houses; though, as regards hotels, a highly efficient chambermaid on a bedroom floor is more common than a good waiter in the dining-room below. But those admirable servants are rare. It may be said—and, indeed, I believe it already has been said—that the work of the English domestic servant is inferior both in quantity and quality to the work of the average servant on the Continent. To explain this, it has been admitted that the English have no innate aptitude for domestic service. However that may be, hotels and restaurants, boarding-houses and service flats, seem to have a knack of collecting the most incompetent.

It is very odd, when you think of it, that, servants being from time immemorial the favourite topic of myriads of English housewives, so little improvement in the standard of English domestic service has been effected by so much talk. English servants do not seem to have changed in that respect since the eighteenth century, and it would be as easy to-day as it was for Swift to draw up *Directions for Servants*. Directions for the restaurant waiter, in fact, write themselves. Even in expensive London establishments, there might be a rule to account

for the frequency with which a waiter will inquire of a customer for his order, and then, presumably remembering a dish left on the kitchen counter, walk away to fetch it while the customer is speaking. After all, for a customer to have to give his order twice allows him the opportunity, if he wishes, of changing his mind in the interval. Then, often enough, that dish which the waiter seems belatedly to remember was intended to be served hot, but waiters evidently bear in mind that hot food exposes the customer to the risk of scalding his tongue and palate.

Directions to the chambermaid will include at least one about bed-making ; namely, to tuck in the shortest possible length of bedclothes at the foot of the bed, so that the occupant may be assured, if in the least restless, of waking early owing to the chilliness of his feet ; for, as is well known, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise, and nine out of ten English chambermaids evidently realize that if awake with cold feet no man or woman is going to lie late.

As for directions to the cook, regarding what happens in many a kitchen of English hotel, boarding-house or restaurant, let us not have the temerity to inquire. That smell of stale burnt fat and ill-cooked food which assails our nostrils as we pass over the gratings of those subterranean fastnesses warns us that here ignorance is relative bliss.

I shall be told that all this fails to show that the servants in English hotels, restaurants, and like places, are worse than those in similar establishments abroad. I hasten to agree. But there is worse to come. I fear that the two chief criticisms which our foreign visitors will make when they have returned home are not going to bear on the slovenliness of our servants so much as on the lack of cleanliness in England and on the disappointing nature of English meals.

A foreigner who resided for some years in England declared afterwards that there ought to be policemen to keep the English streets clean. Of English houses, "excepting those of the great," he wrote :

The English never think which way their doors and windows should face. The rooms are so constructed that, contrary to Galen's rule, there can be no through draught. They have a large part of the wall filled with

glass, admitting the light but keeping out the air, and yet there are chinks letting in stagnant air. The floors are usually of clay, and this is covered with rushes, which are only now and then renewed, but so as not to disturb the foundation, which sometimes remains for twenty years nursing a collection of spittle, vomit, excrement of dogs and human beings, spilt beer and fish bones. From this, on any rise of temperature, is exhaled a vapour which I do not think can benefit the constitution.

These words do not exactly make us English sound fastidiously clean. However, they were written nearly four hundred years ago, for the foreigner in question was Erasmus. It will be said that today foreigners give us a very different reputation. In the United States, notwithstanding that it is a country with no want of what Americans call "modern plumbing," they like to tell of the Anglo-Indian who was invited to come to fish in some lake in a remote district. His prospective host told him that he would have to travel for three days in one train. At this he inquired anxiously, so the story goes: "But where during all that time do I get my bath?" If the story provides a characteristic specimen of American humour, it is also evidence that our partiality for washing has become outside England nothing short of legendary. How, indeed, could we not be the cleanest people on the face of the earth? Were we not the first to introduce bath-tubs into nearly every house, even into the houses of the poor? But I have not in mind any lack of personal cleanliness, although I remember that in the Army during the War it was essential for a private to have shaved; for him to have washed was not deemed so important. I have in mind the absence of cleanliness which we tolerate in our servants, especially those employed in the public establishments where the foreigner this spring and summer is likely to feed and lodge.

We deride the French whom we see in eating-places when we are on holiday in France wiping their glasses and their knives and forks with their napkins before they begin a meal. But are we any the better off because here at home we do not imitate them? It is rare in France, Italy, or Germany to find the whiting left on the handle of a knife or fork blackening your hand (for, paradoxically enough, it is the property of whiting to blacken), but it is a common experience in English eating-houses. Only, so far as I know, in one London tavern—one that boasts it is 170 years old—are the soiled napkins carefully

folded to look as if they were clean, and is the unwary diner told, on discovering the unpleasant deception, that all the clean napkins are at the wash. But it is common enough in many English eating-houses to have to eat off a soiled cloth, and it is not rare for every one of the knives, forks, and spoons on a table laid for four to be dirty, and to have the waiter or waitress astounded by the request for, say, a clean spoon.

If such is the state of things in the dining-room, what must it be in the kitchen? One shudders to imagine! Fortunately, our foreign visitors are not likely to penetrate there. Let us rather consider, then, what they will think of their bedrooms, and, supposing they can afford them, of their sitting-rooms. Sometimes as much as 10s. 6d. a night is asked for an exiguous hotel bedroom in which the furniture can only be described as squalid. But the bedding will be clean. Bed-bugs, certainly, are unknown in the overwhelming majority of English hotels and boarding-houses. In too many of the latter, however, though the room may be larger than in an hotel, not only will the furniture be decayed and the room dingy; the blankets and the cupboards will smell. Yet it is above all in the daily sweeping and dusting of rooms that the foreign visitor will be given proof that English slovenliness includes indifference to dirt. There are, of course, splendidly conducted hotels in England. There are excellent boarding-houses. I am not denying it. But in too many boarding-houses and service flats curtains as far as possible are never shaken, corners are left unswept, rugs and carpets are infrequently taken up, cobwebs form, and the process called dusting is remarkable for resulting in a thicker dust over everything.

The other chief criticism from the foreign visitor is likely to be directed, I said, at the common run of English meals in public establishments. The London correspondent of a Berlin paper has recently published in Germany a book about England. One chapter is devoted to English cooking. He remarks that our soups are usually no better than dish-water, that we do not know how to cook pork and veal, and that we cannot serve up vegetables tastefully. In particular, peas and beans we judge by their size rather than by their tenderness. He adds ruefully that we are poor hands at a sauce. That soup in England does

not usually get beyond dish-water is surely untrue, since there are thick soups as well as clear ; but it needs to be admitted, I fear, that if there are many names for thick soup in England, it too often has only one taste, a taste reminiscent of moistened flour. About sauces, I feel that we have to plead guilty. It is becoming more and more rare for stock of the cook's own brew to be collected in a kitchen, and it thus happens that a gravy concocted of beef extract, for example, will be served with chicken, regardless of the conflict in flavours. The ubiquitous tin and refrigerator have necessarily sounded the knell of much of the good old English fare. A leading English novelist has been dwelling on the curious preference shown by English hotel and restaurant keepers for providing foreign foods out of tins or the refrigerator when excellent English meat, poultry and game, fish in great variety, and, in season, succulent fruit, and cheese are all obtainable. He does not allow for the fact that, where the chance customer has to be catered for, the food out of a tin and the cheese out of silver paper prevent waste at the same time as they save trouble.

Of course, much tinned food nowadays is British. And it is good food. Doesn't an advertisement of tinned soup say, "You can taste the beef"? And other advertisements assert that tinned milk is best for babies and that custard powder makes better custard than do fresh ingredients? Yet the result is that fresh food is neglected, and a Sussex farmer, for instance, after taking his butter to market, has to bring it all back again, unsold. But so much tinned food, whether foreign or British, and fish and meat out of the refrigerator, would not be provided so exclusively in English hotels and restaurants if it were not that so much of the same kind of food is consumed in the English home. There, I think, we reach a clue to the whole matter.

Where but in England is one normally served at the height of summer with tepid beer? We can only put up with it because we English do not care about having our beer cool. Likewise, if from the standpoint of the gourmet, vegetables and soups in this country are deplorably prepared, if we would as soon eat tinned foreign fruit as fresh English fruit, fish from Russia out of the refrigerator instead of fish caught in an English stream

or off the English shore, if coffee in England is nearly always outrageous, and good China tea (so far as I know) is never to be obtained in any public establishment and rarely in a home, it can only be because as a nation we are indifferent to quality in cooking and in food. There are plenty of restaurants and hotels abroad in which the meals are appalling. But also, in France, for example, there are an extraordinary number where you may feed in such fashion that you would not afterwards change places with Lucullus. The reason of their existence is that the ill-prepared and tasteless meal is practically unknown in the French home. A people can be judged by their restaurants and boarding-houses, because such places reflect their own standards.

If, therefore, waiters and waitresses in our restaurants, taverns, and tea-shops and the servants in too many of our hotels, boarding-houses, and service flats, are as indifferent to dirt as they are slovenly, it is not only because they are neither trained nor supervised properly ; it is also because we as a people are not sufficiently attached to neatness and cleanliness to demand that our meals shall invariably be served decently and our bedrooms and sitting-rooms invariably kept clean. If we were really anxious about cleanliness, would English workmen travel home of an evening in the clothes that only too clearly indicate the arduousness of their toil ? Would the house-fly, seen only in summer when I was a boy, now be allowed, thanks to central heating, to flourish all the year round ?

EBB AND FLOW

A Monthly Commentary

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

GREAT festivities are preparing in the two great countries which stand for European civilization as we have known it through our lifetime. London makes ready for the Coronation ; Paris for one more Exhibition where the choice products of art and industry shall be assembled for pride and for enjoyment. Yet, overhead, clouds are banking up. England—all Great Britain—is busy, is making money, spending money ; more workers are in employment than ever before in that populous island ; the unemployed are less by nearly a million than five years ago. But there are still more than a million unemployed, and a dreadful deal of them on the way to grow unemployable. No doubt as the wave of prosperity mounts, the count of unemployed will lessen. But what gives them new chances ? Mr. Harold Macmillan, in a remarkable speech, put to the House of Commons this formidable question : ‘ Suppose the worst : suppose universal disarmament. Where should we all be ? If we all stopped making costly engines that can only be used for destruction, which we order, praying that they need never be used, how should we cope with the situation ? How many would be added to the roll of the unemployed ? ’

I have just come from a house where there was carved over the doorway its owner’s aphorism : “ Nothing is ever so bad as you think it is going to be.” Long experience of many countries has gone into that useful philosophy, which, like most, cannot be taken *au pied de la lettre*. The Great War was worse than ever we had even thought possible ; but we all stood it

**Men and
Marvels**

better than we should have believed, if anyone had told us what we had to face. Humanity after that inhuman experience is still more and not less humane. We can admit that it is a frightening world we live in and still refuse to be frightened. The English are good at that. A fortnight ago, friends just back from France assured me that the country was on the brink of civil war, and that it was "a good place to be out of." My reply was that the French were not going to spoil their Exhibition. Now I learn that France has been flooded north and south this Easter with visitors from England who either heard no rumours or disregarded them. What they knew was that the new exchange made agreeable possibilities more possible than they had been; and France and England will be in better humour than before—I hope also, in better humour with each other.

That is the essential. So long as these two free countries keep in friendly touch there is no need to be frightened. But the friendliness has to be widespread because they are free countries. It does not much matter how Italians at large or Germans at large are disposed. They do not affect the will of their dictators, and these able persons steer a vessel which answers mechanically to the helm. That is not so where free countries are in question. Democracy is difficult, and it is inefficient if the end of government is military strength. On the other hand, it is vastly more adaptable: it can stand more knocking about. France held out four years with the enemy no further from Paris than Oxford is from London; Germany collapsed as soon as invasion of Germany became seriously a menace.

There has to be strength in order that such manifestations of civilized life as the Coronation or the Paris Exhibition can take place with security; and in both the great democracies this is realized by the whole people. So far as foreign policy and military policy is concerned, M. Blum has the whole of France behind him. In Great Britain we may fairly say that the Government is at present regarded as a 'national' government; and there is plainly a widespread determination that social policy shall be conducted from a national, not a party, standpoint. The moral of Mr. Macmillan's speech was that it is necessary to be ready

against such a chance as the slackening of the armament race. Suppose we all give Scylla a wide berth and reduce war risks to a minimum, there is the Charybdis of widespread unemployment; and this is not a fanciful danger. Admittedly, it is very difficult for Germany to agree even that the balance should be fixed where it now stands: probably very difficult for France. But it is reasonably likely that if Germany and Italy are faced with a determination in both England and France to use wealth unsparingly, there will be a change of orientation. Once stop the race, and it would be possible to agree upon reducing the standard so that the same balance could be maintained with less provision of machinery. Herr Hitler—if he survived the change—could order his people to work at what he would, for what wage he chose to sanction. That would not be possible in England. The people would have to decide for themselves what is a living wage and what are the fair hours of work.

In England a social policy has been gradually elaborated by pressure between highly organized labour and on the whole reasonable capital. Men who can get work receive a wage higher than what is paid elsewhere in Europe; and men who cannot work get what in other countries would be acceptable wages. In France similar results have been obtained suddenly by so violent a change that the structure of business has been shaken. But in England and in France there is general agreement that willing workers must not be allowed to starve, and that conditions must be imposed on the employer. Further, we are in sight of a time when it will be admitted, even in the States which preserve individual freedom, that where private capital cannot or will not provide employment, the State shall do so. If another slump should come, the national conscience in Great Britain would not be contented by the dole. Even now it is clear enough that unless very drastic attempts are made to fertilize and reanimate the stagnant areas, political parties will split. A Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer with a Conservative Prime Minister has proposed an expenditure of fifteen hundred millions for armament. That has created a precedent. It has fixed a new scale of values. If fifteen hundred millions for national security is justifiable expenditure, what would be a reasonable outlay

Towards 'Work
or Maintenance'

to end chronic unemployment? Whiggish answers to that will not be tolerated.

The difference between the free countries and those where the State dominates through the will of an individual is that in the latter, effort is directed to a goal, and when that is attained, effort can slacken. Effort does not mean, in France or in England, any curtailment of the standard of living. It does not go beyond stopping the chance to save. But Germans must do without butter that Germany may have more guns. Yet it is not thinkable that there shall be a perpetual rationing of butter and a perpetual accumulation of guns. Some day Herr Hitler will either have to tell his people that the guns are to be used, or that their energies are to have a more normal direction than armament. But will the ascetic military ideal still be accepted? Or will Germany then want the English or French conditions of work and wages? The switch-over from production of war material to production of what can be peacefully utilized and consumed must be more abrupt when the concentration on it has been so tremendous.

Yet even for the free countries it is a formidable thing to contemplate. Production is easy enough; but how to get your markets? How to have the produce consumed? The problem for the free democracies is how to distribute wealth so as to multiply the numbers of those who can consume it; and the way which commends itself to Great Britain at large is certainly not to progress by rationing butter. The world which will see the Coronation next month is a kindlier world, less tolerant of human wretchedness than the one over which Queen Victoria presided. It is not so easy to be ignorant of other people's misery. Here is a good-humoured open-handed nation who have the most perfect detestation of war, yet are obliged to spend huge sums for new war material. They will not be content unless effort and outlay on the same scale are directed to ending the conditions which newspapers and broadcasters bring constantly to their notice.

There is for the moment a kind of pause and expectancy. Mr Baldwin is going. It was in his nature never to do things unless he had to. That is, no doubt, the true Conservative attitude

Mr. Chamberlain also counts as a Conservative ; but he is his father's son, and his father was the least conservative of politicians. Joseph Chamberlain came into note as a social reformer who turned Birmingham from a slum into a city. His son, on the point of becoming Prime Minister, stands before the country as the man who has called on it to face this huge outlay for national security, and has told the country that it can well afford it. There has been no unwilling response ; but nobody knows as yet how Mr. Chamberlain as Prime Minister will construe that phrase, ' national security.' Nobody knows whether he will take the line of saying that so great a strain on the national resources for armament will make it necessary to limit strictly the outlay whose purpose is social betterment. Answer to these questions must only be guess-work. But Joseph Chamberlain as a man of business did not hesitate to spend largely that Birmingham might have clean water and the rest : I do not think his son likely to limit the national outlay by any narrow estimate of the national resources. One would expect from him more decisive action to deal with the distressed areas than was to be looked for from Mr. Baldwin. But another matter is less clear to me. Are the fifteen hundred millions to go simply in securing Great Britain's hold on the Empire and its communications ? Or is the peace of Europe to be regarded as a British interest which a re-armed Britain can defend, not in splendid isolation, but in honourable conjunction with the Powers, great and small, that share Great Britain's attachment to the League ? The outside public has no means of knowing. It knows that Mr. Chamberlain is not a sentimentalist in language. They know also that he was one of the first to declare that further resistance to Italy's action in Abyssinia was impracticable. Yet one should be slow to conclude that Mr. Chamberlain, if he felt that he had power at command, would not use power to prevent lawless usurpation in Europe. Personally, I think he would give early intimation of his intention to act, and so would probably avoid the necessity for action.

He is not only his father's son, but the brother of his brother. How much one can build on that is uncertain ; but this at least

is certain : Sir Austen Chamberlain dying has left behind him the name of a noble Englishman who was a good European. His devotion to France was well known to all, but I do not think it was anywhere regarded with jealousy. It was in his nature to work for appeasement, and the sense of utter loyalty that he created everywhere helped him at one crisis to an achievement which at this moment is undervalued. Locarno gave a respite of several years. More than that, it created a precedent or a model to which there may be a return. When the news of it came through, F. S. Oliver, one of his closest associates, said to me : " This has happened because Austen has been there for the last six months, oozing goodness out of him at every pore." In another difficult and almost hopeless attempt at reconciliation, he again made a kind of bridge because he was trusted. Oliver Gogarty in his brilliant book of Memoirs (*As I Was Going Down Sackville Street*) tells us Arthur Griffith's judgment during the negotiations for the Irish Treaty. " Chamberlain was the best of the whole lot. A clean and honest man." Very few English politicians ever got a good word from Arthur Griffith. Senator Gogarty pays his own eloquent tribute ; but all other homage becomes insignificant beside the expressions of regret in the House of Commons. Mr. Baldwin spoke as only he—and he only on occasion—can speak from the heart. Leaders of the other parties added their word, and finally, with a surprising dramatic touch, Mr. Maxton rose to say in two sentences, that because he often had to separate himself from the general sense of the House, he wished to make it clear on this occasion that what had been said by Mr. Baldwin and the others was said for every man among them. There are times when the House of Commons is a very likeable assembly.

In the Dominions, South Africa stands for a shining example at this Coronation time of what can be effected for reconciliation. Lord Clarendon departed in March amid a shower of bouquets to make way for a new Governor-General, Sir Patrick Duncan, chosen by the Dominion from within the Dominion. This custom, which I think began in the Irish Free State, has much to commend it—though Canada is well content with Lord Tweedsmuir.

**A Good
European**

**Dominion
Consciousness**

Ireland is not a happy instance of harmony in the Commonwealth and will not take formal part in the rejoicings. In fact, Ireland does not yet know where or how she stands in the Commonwealth, and waits meekly till Mr. de Valera shall tell us, through the forthcoming draft of a new Constitution—whose publication is delayed by the ritual observance of translating it into Gaelic. Public opinion in Ireland is apathetic : nobody likes the idea of advising a surrender on principle ; but everybody knows that there are two sides to the dispute, and I cannot but think that the interest of both countries might be served by submitting the economic or financial quarrel to American arbitration. The political one, concerning partition and the naval bases, can only be settled by long lapse of time.

India, with its staggering complications, cannot be expected to join fully in the imperial festivity : the decisions to be taken by Indians and India at this moment are too engrossing. Evidently there is conflict of opinions among Indian nationalists. The Congress party, representing a majority in the variegated mass, do not willingly accept the implication which is written into all the Constitution—that guardianship of minority rights must remain with the British power. These Orientals have accepted from Europe the extreme doctrine of democracy—everything to be settled by votes and everyone to have a vote ; and they refuse to admit that their community is not homogeneous even to the extent that Great Britain can be said to be, or the United States. Since the Constitution limits the absolute right of a majority to decide all issues for the entire mass—which is accepted in homogeneous States—they set their ingenuity to the task of wrecking the Constitution by constitutional means. Undoubtedly no constitution that works by voting will work unless the voters are willing to work for it, and the wreckers may succeed. But then comes the fact that Mr. Gandhi, who still counts for more in India than all the official Congress leaders, also believes in democracy and thinks that the essential for his people is to get experience of its working. Nevertheless he has, up to a point, endorsed the demand of the Congress leaders for a guarantee in advance that the Governors of the provinces will never use the powers which the Constitution orders them to use in certain circumstances.

There is evidently widespread feeling in India that if the Governor-General and Mr. Gandhi met in private discussion an accommodation might be reached. But each side stands on a punctilio of prestige and will not make the first move. At the back of the British attitude there must be recollection of what happened when Lord Halifax received Mr. Gandhi. Some British authorities hold that this proceeding led to grave trouble. It seemed to me then that the meeting between two men of good will avoided much disaster; and that Mr. Gandhi had the courage to make after that interview concessions to the English point of view which no other Indian could or would have made. Matters may be different now: the Mahatma, long withdrawn from active political life, may be unwilling to interfere with those who have organized and led the work of Congress. Yet the chance for any hopeful start of self-government in India on democratic lines probably depends on this: how urgently does Mr. Gandhi desire to see Indians, democratically elected, set to tackling the problems of their own administration—even with a certain limitation on their powers? A parliament grows: all our experience shows that shackles on its expansion soon drop off, unless they correspond to a real necessity. Lord Zetland's speech in the House of Lords indicated sufficiently the measures by which a majority government might dangerously offend feelings in a minority that they themselves could not share. It is at least conceivable that Mr. Gandhi might agree that in the special circumstances of India, which are unlike those of any other democracy, there should be an outside power of preventing majorities from infringing the rights of minorities—at least until those rights had become established by long usage.

A most picturesque episode of the forerunning time has been the *Divine Wind's* arrival, bearing greetings from that other populous island, half the world away. The Japanese have a genius for courteous and significant gesture. One cannot but admire the mastery with which this new-old people use all that Europe has invented; and it is difficult to doubt their sagacity. Yet by their decision to disregard the agreed limit for the size of warships they challenge America to build against them. Sooner

The Old Psychological Rift

Japanese Gestures

than do that, England resigned a claim made good through many generations for supremacy on the seas. A challenge to European supremacy on this element coming from Japan is the one thing which would inevitably bring England and the United States into an understanding so close as to be almost an alliance. Admiration of Japan is always alloyed by an element of fear. Their gallantry and their patriotism go in concert with such appalling efficiency.

Mr. W. J. Blyton in *English Cavalcade* has hit on a seductive idea, anthologizing from what authors have written in prose or verse about the beauty of these island countries—for not only England, but Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, even the Isle of Wight, get separate treatment.

**The English
Rural Scene**

Still it is mainly England. The English do not like us of the outer peoples to say that we feel ourselves foreigners; yet Stevenson, quoted by Mr. Blyton, has that very thing to say: "A Scotsman may tramp the better part of Europe and the United States and never again receive so vivid an impression of foreign travel as on his first excursion into England." We recognize a strangeness—an enviable strangeness—in "the warm habitable age of towns and hamlets, the green settled look of the country." England was never since the Norman Conquest a "land of war," as Scotland was for centuries, and Ireland, alas! for centuries longer. Yet it is not only traces of history which discriminate the beauty of these three kingdoms, like and yet unlike: *facies non omnibus una, hec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum*. A salmon river in England has the same stately flow, the same noble rushes, as in Ireland or Scotland; but only in Devonshire can you catch salmon (I have been doing it) to the accompaniment of wild daffodils. Still the "rich warm valleys of Devon" and the "exquisite quiet of little towns in Somerset lost amid tilth and pastures" over which George Gissing rhapsodized (and Mr. Blyton anthologized him) are not really much more different from Connemara than from the Waste of Cumberland, or even from the country of which Mr. Boyd and Mr. Monkhouse write in their joint volume *Walking in the Pennines*—a welcome contribution to this branch of literature.

The thing can be done in two ways. Such a book may be the expression of intimate familiarity with a countryside, or it may have the sharpness of first impression and record a new contract. If I may be allowed the comparison, books of mine about Ireland and Mr. H. V. Morton's *I Discover Ireland* perfectly illustrate the difference, and unfortunately for me there is no question which is the more popular. But then Mr. Morton is a master in this kind ; and the demand for it grows with the spread of travel. It is comic to find Mr. Hamilton Norway in his Yorkshire *Highways and Byways* lamenting over the spacious emptiness of the Great North Road. That was less than fifty years ago, when you would meet nothing but " the sleepy farmer jogging home from Doncaster in his gig." Heaven help the sleepy farmer nowadays on the Great North Road, or on any other road in England ! *English Cavalcade* is the modern charge of the Light Brigade, and not much less destructive. Yet as the two " Pennine Rangers " insist in their very pleasant volume, for those who care to use their feet, England has endless room, and lovely privacies, even among the ugliest crowdings ; and about them *Walking in the Pennines* is written, as it should be, with that desire to communicate a remembered enjoyment which is the true form of the artistic impulse.

THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

HAMLET WITHOUT THE PRINCE

By J. GLORNEY BOLTON

CORONATION COMMENTARY, by Geoffrey Dennis. *Heinemann*. 8s. 6d.

THE MAGIC OF MONARCHY, by Kingsley Martin. *Nelson*. 2s. 6d.

EDWARD VIII: HIS LIFE AND REIGN, by Hector Bolitho. *Eyre & Spottiswoode*. 10s. 6d.

THE CROWN OF ENGLAND, by the Hon. Ruairaidh Erskine of Marr. *Dent*. 6s.

THE CORONATION BOOK, by William Le Hardy. *Hardy & Reckitt*. 2s. 6d.

KING GEORGE VI, by Taylor Darbyshire. *Hutchinson*. 3s. 6d.

QUEEN ELIZABETH, by Lady Cynthia Asquith. *Hutchinson*. 3s. 6d.

EDWARD VIII, DUKE OF WINDSOR, by Basil Maine. *Hutchinson*. 3s. 6d.

THE THRONE OF BRITAIN, by Claud Golding. *Robert Hale*. 6s.

SALUTE THE KING, by Arthur Mee. *Hodder & Stoughton*. 3s. 6d.

ONE might have seen the publication of many books on Queen Victoria. There must be a number of faded, torn, half-finished manuscripts on the Duchess of Kent and Uncle Leopold, Stockmar and Albert, the wicked uncles. The coronation has, at least, put the centenary of Queen Victoria's accession in the shade. While the Court stood perplexed and in half-mourning, some of these writers—who can doubt it?—quitted the events and personalities of 1837 for the event and the personality of 1937. Taking pen to a new ream of paper, or a new ream

of paper to typewriter, they began to extol the virtues and the charms of England's bachelor King.

Mr. Hector Bolitho, secure in his reputation as the author of *Albert the Good* and *Victoria the Widow and her Son*, appears to have finished the task of describing a Prince's childhood, his youth at Oxford and in the War, his young manhood devoted to arduous tours through the Dominions, India, Burma, and the Argentine. Then comes King George's death and the accession of the Prince Charming. By that time, to be sure, Mr. Bolitho knows what has happened. Charing Cross Road could share with Oxford Street the relief that the "crisis" ended so soon as last December, since the publishers' Spring Season is never in full swing until the middle of March. There was time for Mr. Bolitho to revise the scope of his manuscript. He could write freely of the estrangement between the monarch and the Prince of Wales, which was almost a permanent feature in the domestic relations of the House of Hanover. He could describe the withdrawn sympathies of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Prime Minister. He could stress the idiosyncrasies and ill-proportioned economies of the uncrowned king and write with a confident courage—if, indeed, it be courageous to deprecate the Duke of Windsor. Mr. Bolitho was too good a writer not to revise his manu-

script carefully and attempt a new display of unity. But craftsmanship demanded a replanned and rewritten book. Mr. Bolitho had not the time for this. He has caught the market, but he has not enhanced his literary reputation.

Mr. Ruairaidh Erskine of Marr has been rather less affected by the abdication. His mind and his carefully fostered and latinised style belong to the age of Queen Anne. Many of his sentences are more than a hundred words long and, unlike those of his master Bolingbroke, they are hard to read. The abdication does not disturb his serenity: "what the end to the movement which the abdication of King Edward has so greatly accelerated, and which his brother and successor on the throne of the English must witness, will be, no man can say immediately, nor would it be wise to offer any definite opinion on the matter."

That is certainly not the attitude of the other writers. Mr. William Le Hardy may regret that the admirable illustrations to his book on the coronation ceremonies relate exclusively to the coronation of King James the Second, who managed not only to be crowned but to avoid formal abdication. But Mr. Taylor Darbyshire, who wrote a book on the Duke of York, sees its reappearance as an authoritative life of the King, and Lady Cynthia Asquith's book on the Duchess of York has become the "intimate and authentic" life-story of Queen Elizabeth. Mr. Basil Maine's book is virtually a revised edition of his *The King's First Ambassador*, and as Mr. Arthur Mee devotes only forty pages to King George the Sixth, he cannot complain that his change of loyalty has caused very much of his labour to be wasted. "Among the many accomplishments of King George VI," begins Mr. Claud Golding, "is one that is going to be of great value in the years to come. He knows all there is to be known about 'big business,' and if ruling an Empire cannot be described as 'big business,' it

is difficult to find a better description." For a cover Mr. Golding has an illustration of an ermine cloak, wrapped in cellophane, and on its back, where one expects to find the publisher's name, is the legend: "Marshall and Snelgrove."

From weakness to strength: for there remain the books by Mr. Kingsley Martin and Mr. Geoffrey Dennis. The value of Mr. Kingsley Martin's book is to some extent impaired by the merits of the Editor of the *New Statesman*, who certainly retained his sense of proportion during the "crisis," and who has not since found it necessary to revise his judgments. He would, however reluctantly, support the Roundheads against the Cavaliers, Parliament against the King.

But in one of many illuminating passages Mr. Geoffrey Dennis shows that the issue between Parliament and the King did not, in fact, arise. An all-powerful Ministry never took Parliament into its confidence until it made sure that the King's abdication was final and irrevocable. Space does not permit anything like full consideration of this book—the only coronation book which deserves to be read, and re-read, in the years to come. Mr. Dennis's experiences in the Geneva Secretariat have helped him to see both the country and the prince he loved objectively. He has thought so deeply about the monarchy he is so gifted with imaginative insight, that the most conservative of his readers will cease to resent his cinematographic style and admit that the abdication, itself rooted in history, was a symptom of a profound revolution in our political and social life. If only the acquaintance between the Prince and Mr. Dennis, begun at Oxford, had ripened into friendship there might have been different histories of December, 1936; of King Edward and Mr. Baldwin; of Parliamentary Government. King's Friends are not so dangerous as a King without a friend.

THREE STATESMEN

BY

SIR JOHN MARRIOTT

BOLINGBROKE, by Sir Charles Petrie.
Collins. 12s. 6d.

MIRABEAU : LOVER AND STATESMAN, by Pierre Nézélov. Translated from the French by W. B. Wells. *Robert Hale.* 12s. 6d.

TALLEYRAND, by Comte de Saint-Aulaire. Translated from the French by G. F. Lees and F. J. Stephens. *Macmillan.* 15s.

"WHO now reads Bolingbroke?" Burke once asked. Burke might have answered his own question: "Every one should read Bolingbroke who would really understand *me*." To Burke the political opinions of Bolingbroke were, of course, anathema; Burke's *Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents* was his answer to *The Idea of a Patriot King*, but we should never have had the majestic prose of Burke had he not studied closely the writings of Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke, in fine, occupies in the development of English prose a unique place, midway between Dryden and Burke, and it may be that he will live longer in the history of English literature than in the history of English politics.

Yet his place in English politics is an important one, and Sir Charles Petrie has done well to remind us of it. Bolingbroke owes his place, however, less to his actual achievements on the field of political battle than to his political writings, to which, it seems to me, Sir Charles does something less than justice. Sir Charles gives us, indeed, copious extracts from *The Dissertation on Politics*, but *The Idea of a Patriot King* is dis-

missed in a couple of paragraphs, and to the important *Letter to Sir William Windham*, he devotes no more than a sentence or two. One calls to mind the estimate pronounced on Bolingbroke by Disraeli: "He eradicated from Toryism all those absurd and odious doctrines which Toryism had adventitiously adopted, clearly developed its essential and permanent character, discarded *jure divino*, demolished passive obedience, threw to the winds the doctrine of non-resistance, placed the abolition of James and the accession of George on their right bases, and in the complete reorganization of the public mind laid the foundation for the future accession of the Tory party to power."

Of Bolingbroke, the man and the politician, Sir Charles Petrie, making admirable use of material only recently accessible, has drawn a faithful and vivid portrait.

Bolingbroke was less bad and less great than Mirabeau, but the two men had several points in common. Both were exceptionally endowed with brains; both were prolific writers (though Mirabeau was not on the same plane as an author as Bolingbroke); both were great orators; both were failures politically; and in both cases political failure was due primarily to lack of character.

In moral depravity Bolingbroke could not indeed compete with Mirabeau. *Mirabeau; Lover and Statesman*, is the title of M. Nézélov's book. "Lover"

seems hardly the appropriate word for a man who had the morals of a tom-cat. But if it was the biographer's object to exhibit Mirabeau as an unmitigated scoundrel, unrestrained from lechery by any twinge of conscience; a bad son, a bad husband, a disloyal and ungrateful friend—if this was M. Nézelov's object, he has only too adequately succeeded.

It is, however, much to be regretted that he has devoted more than two-thirds of his book to the "lover," and only one-third to the statesman. The more so as in the concluding portion of the book we have something of real value. Personally (though my reading on the subject has been fairly wide) I have never read anything on the early stages of the French Revolution more vivid than M. Nézelov's pages. He never forgets that he is writing biography, or loses the main thread of his narrative; but the picture which he draws of the States-General and the Constituent Assembly is graphic and arresting. The men and women who played their parts on that historic stage are, in M. Nézelov's hands, no mere puppets. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, Necker and Calonne, Bailly and Barnave, Lafayette and Camille Desmoulins, M. de la Marck and, above all, Mirabeau. We forget the monster of depravity, too faithfully portrayed in the earlier part of this volume; we see only the great statesman, the superb orator, subduing with his torrential eloquence, his merciless logic, his irresistibly beautiful voice, the great assembly which an hour before had been ready to hang him on the nearest lamp-post. In that Assembly Mirabeau was not only the dominating orator, he was the greatest, the only really great, constructive statesman.

Mirabeau died, an old man at forty, less than two years after the meeting of the States-General, less than two years before the murder of the King. Could he have saved France? If so, he might have saved Europe twenty-five years of war.

But could he, if spared, have done it? The answer must remain in doubt; but this is certain: if Mirabeau could not have done it, nobody could.

If Mirabeau has much in common with Bolingbroke, Talleyrand has much in common with Mirabeau. Both were aristocrats by birth; both were richly endowed with brains; both had physical defects, both were, nevertheless, irresistible to women, and both made very ample use of their powers of fascination. But, if Mirabeau, like Bolingbroke, was a failure in politics, Talleyrand's career was one of almost uninterrupted success.

In the sphere of diplomacy Talleyrand has had few equals, and no superior. His perfidy towards his employees was, indeed, shameless. He betrayed the clergy who had sent him as their representative to the States-General; a Minister under the Directory he plotted its overthrow and played a foremost part in the *coup d'état* of 18th Brumaire; the confidential servant of Napoleon he betrayed his master; though he favoured "moderation" in 1815, he intrigued with the "ultras" against Louis XVIII; the champion of "legitimacy" he helped the usurping Orleanist to supplant the legitimate Charles X. Nevertheless, though he was consistently faithless to individuals, he was consistently loyal to France.

This is the man of whom we have a full length portrait drawn by Comte de Saint-Aulaire, himself a distinguished French diplomatist. His book is full of good stuff, but (at any rate in its English dress) it is curiously lacking in graces of style, and consequently it calls for some perseverance to realize how good it is. There are, moreover, one or two rather astonishing statements, e.g. (p. 210) that England "was not represented in the Council of the Coalition" (1812-15). Who but Castlereagh had kept the Coalition together, had dominated the Congress of Châtillon and negotiated the Treaty of Chaumont?

THE I.C.S.

By SIR H. VERNEY LOVETT

THE I.C.S.: THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE, by Sir Edward Blunt, K.C.I.E., O.B.E., with a foreword by the Rt. Hon. Lord Hailey, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. *Faber*. 8s. 6d.

THE main object of this book is, in Lord Hailey's words, to inform candidates for the I.C.S. "what is actually the work which falls to a civilian in India," to show them that it is "the kind of work in which a man can feel pride and a sense of responsibility. The old unquestioning faith is not easy today," for great changes are being initiated. How will these changes affect the desirability of the I.C.S. as a profession for Englishmen?

Sir Edward Blunt, an ex-official who has a long and varied record of distinguished labour in the United Provinces to his credit, glances over the history of the past, a tale told in 1931, by Mr. L. O'Malley, a retired Civil Servant from Bengal described in a foreword by Lord Zetland as "informative and extraordinarily interesting," which our author places first in his bibliography. Here he summarizes the story and brings it up to date with the aid of other authorities, adding pictures of day-to-day administration in his own provinces, drawn from first hand experience and accompanied by shrewd comments. His contacts with the people have been close and varied, and the spirit of his observations is understanding and sympathetic. One of his most interesting descriptions is that of census operations in 1931, "a triumph of good will . . ." Nowhere can we see more clearly the underlying temper of the masses, their real attitude towards the British Raj when care is exercised to see that cruel advantage is not taken of their gullibility, or of their liability to intimidation.

In Chapter V the author gives a succinct account of administration in London, Delhi, and the Provincial capitals, pointing out that from 1784 to 1919, provincial governments were in law merely subordinate agents of the Governor-General in Council, but that up to 1858 they enjoyed in practice a large amount of independence as communications were in those days slow and difficult, and there were no ready means of access from the centre to all parts of the circumference. But from 1859, with the advent of the railway and the telegraph, centralization became effective, and the central government "interfered everywhere. Regardless of differences of custom, language, and economic conditions, it tried to shape all provinces in the same administrative mould." The implied indictment is, in my opinion, overdrawn, but is in essence true. Much, however, may be forgiven, when account is taken of the fact that this government "turned chaos into order, substituted the rule of law for the rule of force, and pressed western science into the service of India. The people understood it, and on the whole approved of it; even its critics gave it ungrudging admiration." I may add that it carried India successfully through the greatest war in history, and that when that war arrived it was received with a remarkable outburst of loyalty and energetic sympathy from India which disagreeably surprised the enemies of England and drove Indian extremism into holes and corners. But an Indian nationalism which had been born under the old regime was naturally quickened by various events during those years of prolonged and widespread struggle. To meet its advancing claims the Declaration of August, 1917, was made, the

Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were devised, and by the Government of India Act of 1919 the nature of the administration was "entirely changed, especially in the provinces" which were invested with considerable independence. By the recent Act of 1935, "another stage and a long one" has been taken on the road of India's constitutional progress. The provinces, as autonomous units, have been endowed with new and far-reaching powers and the centre has been readjusted to meet altered circumstances.

Meantime, as we learn from Chapter VI, the district officer, who is the linchpin of the administration, has daily been going forth to his work and to his labours. "Since 1920 he has suffered many troubles of his own, for he has had to prevent, as well as he could with diminished authority, the breakdown of a constitution which, as he saw it, sacrificed everything, including the welfare of the people for which he was responsible to political expediency." Although "many lost heart and some losing hope, retired prematurely," the administrative machine saved the constitution from breakdown (p. 120); and while Sir Edward Blunt hopes for and expects brighter times under the new constitution, he strongly emphasises the continued and vital importance of British standards and the British element in the administration. His teaching may best be summed up in the words of Lord Willingdon, spoken at the School on July 25th, 1936:

The work of the Indian Civil Service is the finest, the greatest and the most engrossing service in any part of the Empire. I can say with some knowledge of India that this service will go on for a great many years because the Indian people want us to stay.

I have endeavoured to bring out the main features of this valuable book which also contains much useful information on subsidiary subjects.

EUROPE IN ARMS, by Liddell Hart.
Faber & Faber. 12s. 6d.

PROBLEMS dealing with defence are much to the fore at the moment, and so this volume comes at an opportune moment. The various studies which it contains have already been published, mostly in *The Times*. Written in an easy style, the various little essays, for they are best defined in this fashion, fit in aptly enough under the four headings into which the book is divided.

After an introductory chapter, which is in effect, no more than a persuasive plea for rearmament, the author opens in Part I with a critical review of the various armed forces of Europe. He sums up fairly enough the merits and defects of the chief European armies. But does he allow sufficiently for the fact that all this increase of military training and of military effectives is also designed to meet a political need; also to serve as an instrument of national education? In Germany, at least, there is surely no misapprehension as to the potentialities of the new air arm as a possibly and decisive instrument in war; the large effectives that are now being trained in the army, moreover, may be destined for the less glorious rôles of anti-aircraft defence and of the control of the population as a whole, whilst only selected mechanized and other units might serve as the active, mobile, combatant force. Military thought in Europe is unquestionably tending to a solution of this type.

Part II of the book is perhaps the best section of it. In plain, simple language the author sets out the case for and against the capital ship. Again, he similarly treats the cognate problem of the position of Britain in the Mediterranean Sea. The account he gives of the British naval dispositions in those waters during the Italo-Abyssinian War makes good reading. The remaining chapters all tend to the study of the question, "What does Britain need to conduct a War in the future?" It is perfectly

clear that the whole character of warfare has been radically affected by the development of new weapons—warships, guns, tanks, aeroplanes. It is becoming equally clear that, in view of these developments, no future war can be limited to the struggle between armed forces on land. The food supply of nations, the entire national apparatus for the production of war material—or even the means available for its conveyance and supply—are all targets for future combatant operations.

It is, therefore, a question as to how far the whole nature of war has altered in a way that is not rendering obsolete all the accepted methods of warfare, even those that were in use in 1918. The fact is there is need to study war as a whole and to deduce its future manifestations so as to renovate the whole theory of war, as hitherto understood, together with its weapons.

In the final portion of this book Captain Liddell Hart puts forward some forecasts, ending with the statement, "there is reasonable hope that another war may produce the collapse of the attack before the collapse of civilization." Beyond this point he does not venture to proceed. Yet, if his reasoning is correct, there is no doubt that Europe is faced with the dilemma that war under modern conditions of industry and science is becoming an impracticable state. The resources of war machinery have enslaved the mental and physical capacity of man. Such destruction as a modern military organism can deal is also becoming a double-edged weapon. The unknown factors are overweighting all the known data on which any future war can be planned. Unless there be a radical disparity in combatant resources of every kind between two belligerents, it may well be that, in spite of huge armaments and much sabre-rattling, no European statesman will be found prepared to let loose a war on Europe. As against this view there are two possi-

bilities, neither of which Captain Liddell Hart considers; in the first place there is in progress, in the totalitarian states at least, a system of national education which is so biased that it might drive a nation into war because it has become sufficiently ignorant as to the true risks of war, and so persuaded as to the necessity of a military victory, that its rulers might be incapable of restraining popular frenzy: secondly, there is a real danger that the conflict of violently antagonistic political creeds might force a government into an *impasse* where the gamble of a successful war might constitute the sole hope for its own survival.

H. G. DE WATTEVILLE.

AS I WAS WALKING DOWN SACKVILLE STREET, by Oliver Gogarty.
Rich & Cowan. 16s.

OSTENSIBLY this is a book of reminiscences, a record of Irish, Scottish, and London life, in our time, told in the form of endless conversations. But what it has become, in effect, is a chain of witticisms, and, above all, like *Ulysses*, a self-nudation. Gogarty, like Moore, has sacrificed himself to immortality. For that reason alone I do believe that this, if not a book for everybody, is a book for ever.

It has, I gather, provoked the most intense argument for and against. Dublin devours it, by day and by night, and is either enchanted or is perversely reversing Garrick on Goldsmith:

*Here lies Oliver Gogarty
For shortness called Olly.
He talked like an angel:
He wrote it: 'twas folly.*

For once Dublin is more eloquent when silent, engrossed in seeing itself taken by the throat. (Dr. Gogarty is a throat specialist.)

Yet the very sight of those three hundred large pages should suggest that

if Montaigne, Swift, Rabelais, Wilde, La Rochefoucauld, and Oliver Gogarty walked down Sackville Street at the same leisurely pace, all arm in arm, not to bore one another would be a triumph of wit. Gogarty has the tongue of an angel: do his critics take him for a hydra-headed archangel? If there are occasional *longueurs* in his book—and there are—if the fountain of humour sinks from time to time, it never ceases to be a fountain, and the most irrepressibly entertaining fountain imaginable. And it is so true that wits do bore, occasionally! That, indeed, is the justification of everything in this book—of its acidities, vulgarities, flunkeyisms, deep loyalties, sudden passions, brilliancies, inconsistencies, sentimentalities, that it is a genuine self-portrait, a Confiteor, an ablution, even a vomit. It is an undeliberate *Confessions of a Young Man*. One suspects that it is trying to be disingenuous all the time, to play a rôle.

But there is no rôle. Or it is a rôle played with such an inverted simplicity of mind that Simplicity thinks itself less recognizable for standing on its head. But Gogarty should have remembered that every Irish wit writes with his head between his legs—the Celtic Antropophagus—"They walk with their heads below their shoulders." So, Shaw, so Wilde. The fruit is too heavy for the branch. *The Bending of the Bough*.

But let us see a typical run:

Patent medicine is the English patent. Liverpool to London, judging by advertisements for food, purgatives, and hygienic porcelain, is an intestinal tract. The most amazing results are promised: you can lose pounds by taking a patent form of Glauber's salts, or put on pounds by taking the same salts. Agonizing aches in people unseen by the patentees disappear, regardless of idiosyncrasy or a positive Wassermann. And an Englishman believes all this! His empty churches would be filled twice over by the faith he wastes on the permutations and importance of his lower bowel. And yet, in spite of his faith in one medicine for many unseen and unknown diseases, he cannot accept miracles; he burks at the infallibility of the Pope, but unquestioningly accepts the infallibility of the pill. "Just as much as will fit on a three-penny piece," instead of as many angels as will stand on the point of a needle.

Do you smell Chesterton? Smell him not. Chesterton would have believed all that. It is in any case, illustrative, and with Dan Leno we may have our laugh whether we "believe it or not." So Oliver keeps on walking down Sackville Street and one regrets it when he hops into his Rolls—it would be a Rolls!—and vanishes into thin air, the substance of a dream. It is not a book of reminiscences in any ordinary sense. It has a fine scorn for the obvious. It is utterly individualist. It offers no conclusions. In the beginning was Oliver and in the end. The arrogance of it is entirely justifiable.

SEAN O'FAOLAIN.

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PURCELL, by J. A. Westrup. (The Master Musicians.) *Dent*. 4s. 6d.

So little is known of the life-story of England's greatest composer that it was only to be expected fiction should attempt to make up for the lack of fact. One of the merits of Mr. Westrup's volume is that it strips this fiction away, leaving us with nothing that cannot be verified by research. Such a spare narrative may be a handicap from the popular point of view, but musicians will be grateful. Moreover, Mr. Westrup is so well read in the history of the period that he is able to compensate the reader somewhat for a necessarily meagre portrait of the composer himself by supplying a vivid and authentic account of those conditions under which he worked. Such conditions were almost entirely dictated by the Court, the Stage, and the Church, during the reigns of Charles II, James II, and William and Mary; and here Mr. Westrup knows his ground thoroughly.

It is perhaps indicative of the frailty of art's hold on life that, although Purcell wrote the music for as many as fifty dramas (not to mention instrumental music, songs, anthems, and so forth), it was not until the foundation of the Purcell Society in 1876 that this music began to be made accessible for performance. Even now we are in the main ignorant of his music. It would be easy to blame the innate conservatism of singers, conductors and producers, and there is no doubt that they are still chary of giving Purcell an adequate hearing; but such blame would not really hit the mark. The truth is that much of Purcell's music, like much of Handel's, is often unsuitable to the modern appetite, being incidental to plays that hold no further appeal or else considerably minimized in its attraction by being tethered to the occasional and fatuous verse of royal welcome songs and birthday odes. Nevertheless, such

operas as *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Fairy Queen*, *The Indian Queen*, and *King Arthur* ought not to be left to the mercy of remote and private performances. Why does not the B.B.C., which otherwise does so much for music, help to familiarize the nation with the music that really is its birthright? And one would have thought that Purcell, of all composers, might have been suitably represented on the stage and in the concert-hall during this year of the Coronation.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Westrup's scholarly book, with its picture of the times and detailed analysis of the music, will do something to right the present wrong. Such a "life" was urgently needed, and the publishers are to be congratulated on including it in a series the cheapness of which makes it available for all. Mr. Westrup's analysis of the music is illustrated with frequent and pertinent examples, and his valuable appendices include a complete catalogue of Purcell's works. If, in avoiding any suggestion of that fanciful attitude which has hitherto marred the books about this and most other composers, he has perhaps gone a little too far in the other direction, it is at least a fault on the right side. "The man himself is in his music, and that insistent evidence of personality digs us out of our complacency, compels attention and holds our love." And Mr. Westrup will have done much for his idol and for English music as a whole if he helps to restore the art of one whom a contemporary called "the delight of the nation and the wonder of the world." For Purcell is English to the core; and if he does not always transcend as easily as Bach and Haydn the conditions imposed upon his art by the circumstances in which it was written, at least we have no better music. And "what no one will fail to find in Purcell at his best is a spring of life, a vitality that glows with the effect of the whole man."

C. HENRY WARREN.

LODGERS IN SWEDEN, by Romilly and Katherine John. *Faber & Faber.* 12s. 6d.

THE standard for travel books has risen amazingly during the past few years. Hack works based on a fortnight's tour in a foreign country, followed by a month's reading in the British Museum, no longer have a chance. Their place is now being taken by lively and intelligent personal records, written by people who have troubled to use their eyes and brains and have been at pains to learn the language of the country described. So much nonsense has been printed about Sweden by guide-book compilers that it is refreshing to come across a book which gives a recognizable picture both of the land and its people, and neither ignores their faults nor underestimates their virtues. The Johns divided their six months in Sweden between Stockholm, a remote hamlet in Värmland, and a fishing village on the West Coast. They succeeded in learning a good deal of Swedish; they made friends; they formed their own judgements. A delightful ripple of amusement runs through their pages and it is improbable that their candid but friendly criticisms will make them enemies. The Swedes have the pardonable human weakness of boasting of all the virtues they do not happen to possess and taking modestly for granted all the qualities in which, in fact, they excel.

Many English visitors, out of politeness, accept them at their own valuation and return to England repeating like parrots what they have been told about the excellence of Swedish education, Swedish honesty, Swedish hospitality, the "high standard of living," the superiority of the Swedish *cuisine*, the enlightened System which controls the sale of alcohol and so forth. Actually "education," as the word is understood in England and the Latin countries, scarcely exists in Sweden, more's the pity. Although there is not much actual destitution among the working-classes and comparatively little unemployment, the "standard of living" of the inflated middle-class is far below that of England or France. Almost every one who possesses a spare room lets lodgings. Swedish food, though attractively presented, is inferior in quality; and the Swedes have not yet agreed upon civilized hours for eating it. The famous Bratt System for controlling the sale of alcohol (which does not seem to have bothered the Johns, who never even learnt how to spell "snaps," the chief national stimulant) is more maddeningly idiotic even than our own licensing regulations. The worst aspects of Swedish life are its outward respectability and its terrible monotony. For this reason the intelligent Swede, of either sex, like the Scotch, the Irish and the Welsh, gladly becomes, when escape is possible, an "absentee patriot."

Sweden's most valuable exports are her nationals. The industry, efficiency, reliability and Nordic virtues of the race find their fullest scope away from home. Although the Johns refrain from careless raptures and were not impressed by much that they were invited to admire, they seem to have been conscious of the peculiar, unseizable charm of what is, in some ways, the most "petty bourgeois" of the Scandinavian countries.

DOUGLAS GOLDRING.

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HARDY and RECKITT,
2, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, W.C.2.

LETTERS TO A FRIEND, by Winifred Holtby. Edited by Alice Holtby and Jean McWilliam. *Collins*. 10s. 6d.

THE gallant personality of Winifred Holtby had its own place in the London of yesterday, for there was no one who in any way could be compared with her. She was a product of the Yorkshire community described in her posthumous novel *South Riding*, and displayed in her noble physique the unspoilt Norse strain that is still to be found on our North Sea coast. In the last year of the War she left Somerville College to join a WAAC unit in France, returned to Oxford in 1919, and served an enthusiastic apprenticeship to letters while coaching pupils, lecturing in the University Extension field, and speaking up and down the land with all the force of her eager conviction for the League of Nations Union. Her vitality was astonishing, and her versatility the envy of her associates. By every one who came within the range of her glowing spirit she was admired and beloved without reserve, and her death in 1935, at the age of thirty-eight, was the going out of a radiance that we cannot forget.

In 1920, while still at college, Winifred Holtby began writing to the friend who had been her superior officer in the WAACS. Miss Jean McWilliam had gone to South Africa, and she became head of a now famous school in Pretoria. It is to her that all the letters in this volume are addressed, and she has shared the editing with Mrs. Holtby. Coming from Winifred Holtby they could not be other than they are—a day-to-day record of her high spirits and abundant living, and her swift taking hold of the opportunities of London. She had no luck with her short stories, nor did she make a hit with any early novel. Her own opinion clearly was that she did not deserve to. Success, however, came quickly after a joyous speaking tour in South Africa, and then the gods allowed her only eight years for the spending of

her talents and her overflowing affections.

"Your letters are wonderfully interesting: I keep them all," she wrote to her friend in 1922. That is something of a tell-tale sentence. Winifred Holtby was a copious correspondent. She certainly found delight in letter-writing, as in every other chosen activity. But it is not possible to read this series without seeing that the mail to Capetown was for a her a fortunate opportunity for regular literary exercise. Not seldom she adopts a self-conscious air, and there are descriptions, both of urban and rural scenes, which read like passages designed for later use. That, of course, is entirely legitimate, and I have marked many pages that would shine in any novel—as, for instance, descriptions of life in the homes and streets of Bethnal Green. There is a delightful vignette of Mr. Winston Churchill on the platform, and we get sketches of her elders and contemporaries which are at once vivid and just. Winifred Holtby's literary tastes in books and music, as revealed here, would obviously have undergone drastic revision if she had lived. It is notable that her political mind matured with remarkable rapidity as soon as she added editorial writing to her platform work on behalf of a sane and generous international order.

It is greatly to be regretted that the letters were not submitted to correction by an expert eye. Excision here and there would have been an improvement, and some explanatory notes are needed. Winifred Holtby's spelling was a joke to herself, but it is plain that many of the blunders scattered through the volume are due to careless transcription. There can be no excuse for the misprinting of a dozen or more famous and familiar names: e.g., Brahms, Hanotaux, Philip Snowden, Michael Sadleir, Graham Wallas, and even the best-known contemporary novelist of the Jones clan.

S. K. RATCLIFFE.

THE 20TH CENTURY IN THE FAR EAST, by P. H. B. Kent. *Arnold*. 16s.

400 MILLION CUSTOMERS, by Carl Crow. *Hamish Hamilton*. 10s. 6d.

MR. KENT arrived in China when the mess and misery of the Boxer rising was being cleaned up, and for many years he has been a prominent personality in Tientsin, intimate with most of the leading Chinese and foreigners. With his clear, easy style and judicial mind he has given us an admirable survey of the problems of the Far East, which, as he emphasizes on the first page, have an equally direct and personal interest for the West.

Much of the book is occupied with a historical retrospect, showing how the present situation has come about. Though the Revolution of 1911 overthrew the Manchus easily enough—they knew as all China did that they had exhausted the “mandate of Heaven”—it succeeded in nothing else. Sun Yat-sen, despite his magnetic personality, was totally devoid of constructive ability. After Yuan Shih-kai's death China lapsed into a welter of civil wars and was only brought to her senses by the shock of the Japanese seizure of Manchuria in 1931.

That year, Mr. Kent well says, will one day be seen as one of the great turning-points in history. If Russia had not inexcusably intervened in 1895 to deprive Japan of the lawful fruits of her victory over China, it is very likely that the Japanese would never have started on that mainland expansion which has caused so many anxieties, to themselves now as well as to others.

There can be little doubt that Japan stands in a most delicate position. Russia's immemorial land hunger, as sharp under Soviet as under Empire, has led her to overrun and virtually annex Outer Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan and to build up huge armaments in Eastern Siberia. The Japanese thus find themselves compelled to try to

extend their power over Inner Mongolia and North China, both for economic reasons—since Manchuria is a heavy and ceaseless expense and North China is full of the things they want—and on strategic grounds.

But China is no longer what she was in 1931. The extraordinary vitality of her recovery and the real national unity she has discovered are well shown in Mr. Kent's pages. She is in no mood to submit further to Japan's exactions and has shown it plainly. What now will Japan do? Mr. Kent believes that a gesture by the West would be enough to decide the issue. Others may believe that it will be settled by the Japanese themselves, who show a strong disposition to put a check upon their military men, as they actually did in connexion with similar mainland ambitions in 1922.

Mr. Carl Crow is not interested in politics. Even civil wars and boycotts he regards philosophically: in the long run, like the lickings by Tom Sawyer's Aunt Sally, they “don't amount to shucks.” As an advertising agent for many years he has been brought into the closest touch with all classes and qualities of the Chinese, and these he describes with infinite gusto and reality. With allowance for Mr. Crow's lively wit, here indeed are the Chinese. A more delightful book could not be imagined.

From it you may learn of the invincible conservatism of the Chinese—what his grandfather liked, he likes and his grandson will like; of his complete subservience to family dictation; of his ingrained distrust of personal responsibility and dependence on collective security; of his amazing resource in getting out of a tight place: and of how he can sell articles at cost price and still make a fortune.

Among so many good stories quotation is impossible; but one particularly likes the tale of the two coolies who made a large sum by buying up the special

supplement of a foreign newspaper as fast as it was printed, because its enormous size enabled it to be sold as waste paper at a profit of 25 dollars per 1,000 copies. Not knowing what had happened, the paper's proprietors were innocently delighted at the huge demand. But very few people ever saw that supplement, except the paper's regular subscribers, and the ingenious coolies.

O. M. GREEN.

HARVEST OF THE MOOR, by Margaret Leigh. *Bell.* 8s. 6d.

MISS LEIGH'S previous book, *Highland Homespun*, dealt with ten years of farming in the Western Highlands. It was interesting for the light it threw on the relics of the crofting system and mentality in a country too steep for the appliances of big business agriculture. Her present book is about farming on the edge of Bodmin Moor in Cornwall; but as she has been there only eighteen months, the book relies more, obviously, on the narrative of work and the writer's own reflections. Our interest being centred on the writer's actual farming problem, there is one point on which she might have been more specific for a start—the reason for swapping the Highlands for Cornwall. She had to give up Achnabo, she says, just when it was beginning to turn the corner, on account of expense. Certainly the acreage at Trenoweth is much smaller, but much of the former land was waste and wood, she had it on generous terms, her labour bill seems to be about the same as before, and her heart, obviously, is still in the Highlands. Without doubting that the reason was as given, one feels that it needed more specifically under-lining in a book of this kind.

There are three things which contribute to the tone of the present book; a love of wild places and meditation, a

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DENT

zest for action for its own sake—scythe, axe, horse-back, and a “beggars-can’t-be-choosers” sort of gusto with which she flings herself into Milk Marketing Board dairying and business farming generally.

These put a stress of their own into an otherwise plain tale of daily doings. Although bound to modern processes Miss Leigh is a crofter at heart, and hankers for a less scheduled existence. “That it were possible to purchase freedom with simplicity!” is the under-current of her theme. That is why she is a woman of the moor and mountain; she loves the places where in the past men have lived with a minimum of money-exchange, where little interposed between the work and its human ends.

Her holding of forty acres is high up on the edge of the moor, which offers much rough grazing and many an excuse for excursions on horseback to round up cattle, and excursions of the mind over a prospect of the sea or sky. For the rest, civilization rattles its corrugated iron at her, but the primeval Cornish wind whistles through the book and drowns even that. The road ends before it reaches the farm, and the gap of stones and mud, in which lorries stick and have to be hauled out by the horse, is both exasperating to the business side of her and satisfying to the world-losing one. Coming south she found her experience of Highland haymaking useful, for she struck, in 1936, one of the wettest seasons in memory. She imported Guernsey cows to her windy height, and despite neighbours’ forebodings they justified the experiment. There are the ups and downs of pigs and poultry, with all the time an eye to the timeless moor on which “I dream of ranching, and pray meantime for more money, so that we may jettison the clanking churns and buy Galloways, and sit on ponies waiting for them to calve and rear their calves to maturity.”

ADRIAN BELL.

THE HONEYSUCKLE AND THE BEE, by Sir John Squire. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

“WE have to inform the public of a remarkable discovery,” wrote Leigh Hunt in 1820—the discovery being, that there were “large tracts of England undiscovered,” waiting to be explored, on foot.

But the nineteenth century was to make up for all this. From Hazlitt to R. L. S., the pleasures of tramping the country were rammed home, till Max Beerbohm, starting a reaction, wrote of the bestialising influence of walking for pleasure. Walking dropped out, and cars came in, so that a generation later, it has become necessary to re-discover that even though the sound of traffic is never completely blotted out, walking for pleasure is still possible.

Sir John Squire is one of these pioneers. “We are transported,” says Leigh Hunt, “to hear the linnets, thrushes and blackbirds; the grave gladness of the bee.” Sir John can still hear that sound, and the brass chords of the town band in the distance playing the old tune about the bee and the honeysuckle only intensify the country essence, and make more vivid the thoughts about the past which walking engenders.

This is, in fact, a book of reminiscence mixed with observations of the English country—unoriginal enough in theme for the reason of its success to be worth explaining.

To start with the plan. The book is written round a real walk, a contemporary walk, and this framework, the walk part, is itself good. Without wasting time over too-easy attacks on the monstrosity of modern main roads or the unpicturesque uniformity of contemporary pubs, the author describes the face of England as it is, not as someone thinks it ought to be. He even experiments with that great walking-tour question—whether the agony of the interminable slog out of London is recompensed by the sense of having

earned your pleasure at getting away from it. He actually sets out from London *along the Kingston By-pass and Portsmouth Road* to Guildford, and is thereby able to appreciate, when he gets there, the comparative virginity of that other Surrey which is *not* "all villa-dom, sand, golf courses and Woking."

Out of the Portsmouth Road emerges a character—a tramp ("the poor old man bad boots he has")—who talks of the great Keats and the great Marie Corelli in one breath; and out of the tramp incident arise reflections, and descriptions of other kinds of tramps, and reflections, and so on. I have no doubt this plan, like every other, has its literary forbears. There is something of Hazlitt in it, down even to the genially unacademic misquotation of Spenser at the beginning of the book: but there is no doubt it is extraordinarily successful.

As for the reminiscences—this informal method, deliberately chosen, allows the Squire excellences to work freely to the surface. Only a few lines of poetry: but many pictures—of Saintsbury very old, and Rupert Brooke very young. T. E. Hulme at a *salon* in Soho. Aneurin Williams—and for him a background description of a Fabian-Dolmetschy Hindhead of twenty-five years ago. Even better descriptions sometimes of things which the author has never seen but only imagined—such as the inside of the local museum, which never happened to be open at the right moment, "where there may be a Cromwellian pike, or some Polynesian paddles, or some little yellow snakes, woolly in bottles."

This, of course, is parody: and there are scraps of genuine Squire parodies (of Yellow Book authors); and then a paragraph which makes you want to collect beetles; and another (by the author of *The Birds*) which makes you want to learn how to recognize the nuthatch. Then a bit of cricket reminis-

cence. Then a memory, from just after the Wilde trial, of hearing the word "Oscar" shouted by roughs at Billingsgate. Then people, again.

There is no doubt that Sir John has known a great many interesting men. But it is equally certain that the value of the book does not depend on that. On the whole, it is a record of unastounding tastes and enjoyments; but familiar pleasures are here actually re-animated for us by being placed in the context of a distinct and expressive personality. STEPHEN POTTER.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS, edited and translated by H. E. Butler. *Jonathan Cape.* 15s.

THE twelfth century was profoundly articulate. From it come Memoirs, Chronicles, Treatises of all kinds, and Autobiographies in a prodigal flow which presents to the historian such a store of rich material that he is as yet thoroughly embarrassed by it. Some day all the available documents will have been sorted and classified, and the more important be made generally available. But that day is still distant, though it is brought nearer by such work as this of Mr. Butler's. His contribution to the process is among the happiest. For to him has fallen the lot of translating a document which is not only of profound importance to the specialist, but which also presents to the more general public an odd character, who is so amusing and yet so sympathetic, that they are urged, in their own interests, to make his acquaintance as soon as they can.

Giraldus Cambrensis (who for some queer reason is never called Gerald of Wales, though we never think of speaking of Johannes Sarisberiensis, but always John of Salisbury) was an immensely vain, vastly human Welsh Archdeacon. He had studied in Paris, Oxford, and Lincoln, where, to judge from his own

account of the matter, he became the most learned and the most versatile scholar since the Flood. He was also more than a little of a Welsh Nationalist, and is one of the very few twelfth century writers who can find good words to say of the Welsh. Most of this autobiography, for instance, is given to a long account of how he fought valiantly for the independence of the Welsh Church against the Archbishop of Canterbury, who not only wanted to bring all Wales within the orbit of his authority but to give the Welsh very bad bishops as well.

In this long conflict Giraldus found his life's work, and when he came to write his autobiography it was naturally in this that he was most interested, and so he gave most of his space to it. But he has much to say about schools and universities, about Ireland, which he visited several times, and about the general flavour of the scholastic and ecclesiastical life of his day. Mr. Butler has translated his Latin into an English prose which faithfully reflects the raciness of the original; and he has introduced us to the twelfth-century worthy with whom, above all others, we feel ourselves at home. Bernard of Clairvaux, the greatest of them all, is too austere for general company; John of Salisbury too learned for familiarity; Thomas Becket too formidable for friendship. But with Giraldus one can be a familiar friend, laughing at him and with him, and in the process learning much about the world he lived in.

ROGER LLOYD.

LETTERS TO HIS FIANCÉE, by
Léon Bloy. Sheed & Ward. s.

THIS—the first English translation of its author—should have been an event, perhaps the greatest of the publishing season. In fact, it is nothing of the kind. Why Messrs. Sheed & Ward chose the love-letters as an introduction to Léon Bloy cannot be imagined—unless they wished to concede as much as

possible to a public taste to which their author never made any concession. Even then the publication is done none so cannily. Search the book as you may, you will not find in it even the name of the lady to whom the letters were addressed—Jeanne Molbech, daughter of Christian Molbech, Danish poet.

However, here is the beginning of Léon Bloy in translation, and we have to make of it as much as we can. For it would be necessary to go back beyond Newman to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to find a Catholic mind of such potency as Léon Bloy's. It would be necessary to go back beyond Dostoevsky to John Donne to find a religious artist of such profession, and back to Bossuet to find French prose of anything like this arrogance and splendour. Yet Léon Bloy has remained until now the coterie pet of the *renouveau spirituel* of intellectual Paris—whose leader, by the way, Jacques Maritain, already well-known here, was Léon Bloy's convert and godson. Already a curious literature has begun to grow up. Pierre Termier, Léopold Levaux, Stanislas Fumet, Hubert Colleye, have all published books with the same illustrations and similar apologies for their author's violence. And a psychological gentleman of letters—Ernest Seillière (*"de l'Institut"*)—has indeed thought the time already come for debunking and written a long and tortuous book to prove that Léon Bloy wished to ally and finally equate himself with God—which may be true, but is not very exciting.

That is intellectual Paris of the *renouveau spirituel*. Here there is nothing—except these letters, translated by Barbara Lucas with a little uncertainty and great charm.

In them one finds as much as one can of the serener Léon Bloy who never appeared again in his work till the end when, having exhausted his enormous vitality and made his peace with

the clergy, he wrote little essays on death and the Germans and first-communion memories. There is a little autobiographical detail on Anne-Marie Coulet (again, unnamed in this publication) the apocalyptic prostitute of *Le désespéré*. There is a project for the book which became *La Femme pauvre*. There is the spot passage on the mystico-sexual nature of woman. And there are places—

... the thing that was revealed to me some time ago and that I alone in the world know—that this Sign of sorrow and ignominy is the most expressive image of the Holy Ghost. Jesus Who is the Son of God, the Word made flesh, and Who represents all humanity, carries this Cross which is bigger than He and which crushes Him. Simon of Cyrene had to help Him to carry it . . . chosen from all eternity for such millions of beings to help the Second divine Person to carry the image of the Third. . . .

—where the amazing (and probably hereafter) exegete of *Celle qui pleure* and *Le sang du pauvre* reveals himself for a moment, in miniature.

But, for the most part, it is Léon Bloy red out—ten years of rebellion and ignominy from which he turned with the gestures of a child to this new possible haven of Christian marriage. For the rest we have to wait.

And perhaps we ought to wait some years. Léon Bloy, who projected a divine Symbolism of History, dates and dies, was born in the year of the Communist Manifesto and died in the year of the Bolshevik Revolution, fulfilling the exact allotted span of three-score years and ten. Perhaps he ought not to enter English consciousness in the year of the Spanish Civil War when all the absolute issues to which he dedicated himself are newly blurred into the extremes of relativity. We remember how Nietzsche has been spoilt for us, first by the Great War and now by the Nazis.

RAYNER HEPPENSTALL.

DEAD MAN LEADING, by V. S. Pritchett. *Chatto & Windus*. 7s. 6d.

DAUGHTERS AND SONS, by I. Compton-Burnett. *Gollancz*. 7s. 6d.

THE WHEEL TURNS, by Gian Dauli. Translated by Bernard Miall. *Chatto & Windus*. 8s. 6d.

If it were possible, in the modern fiction market, for an author to follow his own inclination rather than that of his publishers and readers, I think Mr. Pritchett would long ago have been recognized as one of our best short-story writers. His aptitude is for the briefer form; *quickness*—quickness of situation, of dialogue, of metaphor—has been the characteristic of his writing since the beginning. He can suggest at once what is typical and odd about a person or a place; and a vivid grasp of anecdote gives even his slighter sketches conviction. It is perhaps worth noticing that nearly all his short stories have been about England, while in his earlier novels at any rate he tended halfway through the story to transfer his characters to Spain or some other landscape in which life was dramatically different. That is, his short stories on the whole were realistic, his novels (though still realistic in detail) romantic. I do not say that every novelist should write about the country he lives in, the people who pass his front gate; but, other things being equal, he will be a better writer if he does. One other tendency of these earlier novels was that the conflicts which he would present barely in a short story became confused by elaboration and each character developed at his centre a sort of emotional buzz that was at times unreal. Mr. Pritchett has got rid of these faults, chiefly I believe by making discoveries in his short stories and then bringing his novels up to their level. His best work is still, I think, a long short story called "Sense of Humour" which appeared in the second number of *New Writing*; that, probably, is the direction of what he will write in the future. *Dead Man Leading*, however, is easily the best

novel he has written and it is a fine achievement.

The characters in this case develop their emotional buzz and then disappear into the South American jungle. The jungle becomes the focus of their exasperations, hopes, curiosities, fears, and it is magnificently imagined. Do you remember the description of the tropics in *A High Wind in Jamaica*? Mr. Pritchett gives a picture as surprising and actual, but here the sky is immovable as the blue wall of a house, the river disappears in tunnels of vegetation, there is drought, or whole landscapes are slimy with rain, and we are left with an appalling sense of the monotony and terrifying solitude of unexplored forests. On one side *Dead Man Leading* is an excellent antidote to the poker-face reports of expeditions given by explorers and the deceptively modest trips of Mr. Peter Fleming: the characters in Mr. Pritchett's novel are recognizable human beings and not merely automatic sportsmen. Consciously or not, they are escaping from the tangle of their lives into the endless confusion of the jungle; they hack their way, sometimes with a frightful desire for the solitude which will overwhelm them; they are bored, they develop facetiousness into a private language, day after day passes with the same aimless concentration. The reader feels—what may or may not be true—that all expeditions are like this. The

reality of Mr. Pritchett's jungle is so immediate that in the one or two passages where he hints at symbolism and the "inner journey" in each of his characters this reality is not at all weakened and the human motives are enlarged. I am afraid that I may have given a rather muddled impression of this novel, which is a triumph of imaginative writing.

Miss Compton-Burnett's *Daughters and Sons* is, like all her novels, brilliantly accomplished, and either you will enjoy it immensely or not at all. By removing from her narrative everything except the dialogue, and setting her characters in a non-existent Victorian age, she gets many strange effects. To anyone who has never read a Compton-Burnett novel, one can best suggest it by saying that its atmosphere is a mixture between that of a detective story, in which everyone hates and throws suspicion on everyone else, and of a Greek tragedy ruled by Fate. The Ponsonby family in *Daughters and Sons*, tyrannized by an old grandmother who barks at them and opens their letters, is seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. The individual members of the family and their manner of speech are severely stylized, as though they were in the limelight all wearing togas, and yet the family itself emerges as a living entity torn by conflict. The cruelty, wit, oddness and prim horror of Miss Compton-Burnett's world, with its monotonous and electric conversations, may not appeal to you, but I urge you to try *Daughters and Sons*.

The Wheel Turns is an extremely long but very readable novel, told in the first person, of modern Italy with hardly a mention of politics. It is a pleasure to find so many people talking, eating, drinking, making love and having rows under Heaven rather than under Fascism. The bubbling realism and the sexual adventures, which are very well told, should make it popular. It has been well translated.

G. W. STONIER.

Read V. S. PRITCHETT

on PÍO BAROJA

IN

TENDENCIES OF THE
MODERN NOVEL

3/6

Allen & Unwin.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

for the benefit of our many overseas readers we provide here each month a brief sketch by way of introduction of our Contributors to "The Fortnightly" public.

With all eyes on London and the crowning of the sole surviving King-emperor (in any effective sense) the English genius is, so to speak, up for inspection.

Sir John Squire, who writes *con amore* of our peculiar national traits and institutions, is himself a characteristic representative of that unusual type, the English man of Letters—*English* unalloyed. Since he came down from Cambridge in 1907 he has had a distinguished record as poet, critic and editor. In a varied and versatile experience two periods stand out—his association with *The New Statesman* in its early years (he was Literary Editor from the beginning, 1913, until the end of the War and also Acting-Editor in 1917-18), and his long and successful editorship of *The London Mercury* from 1919-1934. Suitably enough, he is editor of the English Men of Letters series, and also Joint Editor of the English Heritage series. Born and educated in Devonshire he likes to describe himself as a "provincial," and his latest book, *The Honeysuckle and the Bee*, which is part reminiscent, part descriptive, being the record of a desultory journey from London to the home of his youth, depicts a soul undaunted by the turmoil of modern life and still attuned to the English countryside. On many occasions he has stood for Par-

liament, but, like THE FORTNIGHTLY, he is impatient of party harness and requires of a Government only that it shall be national, democratic and social.

In **Geoffrey Dennis**, who sets out in his own diamond style *What the King Does*, THE FORTNIGHTLY welcomes a contributor whose work is, in the true sense of that over-worked word, distinctive. We think so highly of his latest book *Coronation Commentary* (reviewed on another page) that we are taking the unusual course of reproducing an excerpt after publication. Also a Devonian, Geoffrey Dennis, after a distinguished Oxford career, was caught by the War, had five years of Army life which he then exchanged for international civil service as one of the original members of the League of Nations Secretariat. But he has contrived to make a career as a writer, parallel to his work at Geneva. His remarkable study of "The End of the World" earned for him the Hawthornden Prize in 1930, and he has published five novels, the first of which, *Mary Lee* (1922), placed the author at a bound in the first class of writers of fiction. He will shortly be resigning from his post as Editor and Chief of Document Services for the League, and will be free to devote himself to the craft of writing of which he is such a notable exponent.

England has her blemishes as well as her unique virtues. It is of them that **Montgomery Belgion** writes in the spirit of '*qui aime bien châtie bien*. Our contributor has had a varied experience of journalism in London, Paris and New York. His publications include *Our Present Philosophy of Life* (1929) and *The Human Parrot* (1931). He is at present engaged in a study of Erasmus.

Many of the visitors from overseas will respond more fervently perhaps to the name of Scotland. **Ritchie Calder**, who sees clearly the twentieth-century tragedy of Scotland, is young, fresh and patriotic enough to discern also Scotland's opportunity by forethought to remedy the present reproach that the country is one big depressed area (as indeed the unemployment figures bear out). He writes with special knowledge of the new industrial processes and the immense powers of science left unused.

Thomas Lodge, C.B., writes with authority and sympathy of Britain's "oldest colony," having been a member of the Commission of Government which was appointed in 1934 to set Newfoundland's house in order. During twenty years in the Home Civil Service he was continuously concerned with matters affecting trade and shipping, and it is to the need for economic readjustment to the new age that he directs our attention rather than any repining about Newfoundland's temporary loss of status.

The shifting European scene is the subject of two articles by **Wickham Steed** and **Charles Tower**, both of

them experienced observers. The former needs no introduction. Charles Tower is foreign editor of *The Yorkshire Post*. He has been 'on the job' for some thirty years, and is known to the present generation by his lucid exposition of 'World Affairs' from time to time for the B.B.C. **Willard Price** is another old friend whose fascinating, personal articles reveal a remarkable insight into the ways of the Oriental.

Lord Sempill is well known as a pioneer of civil aviation. He succeeded to the peerage in 1934, and has been associated with a variety of aerial transport enterprises in Great Britain and abroad. He has been president for three years of the Royal Aeronautical Society. It is interesting to note that after leaving Eton he served his engineering apprenticeship in the shops (1910-1914). During the Great War he rose to the rank of Colonel in the R.A.F.

Pio Baroja, a Basque and a distinctive member of that *pléiade* of Spanish writers identified with the resurgence which led to the Republic, has written his tale of Blas, the Knife-Grinder, specially for THE FORTNIGHTLY. It is a characteristic sketch of queer, intensely individual people: instinct with that "laconic and caustic realism" which V. S. Pritchett, to whom we are indebted for the present translation, defines as Baroja's distinctive quality in the collection of FORTNIGHTLY articles *Tendencies of the Modern Novel*, which was published by Messrs. Allen & Unwin in 1934.